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MAGAZINES UNDER GOEBBELS *By Fletcher Pratt*

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"All that the man on the street knew was that he and his were being mercilessly bombed on every cloudy night . . ."

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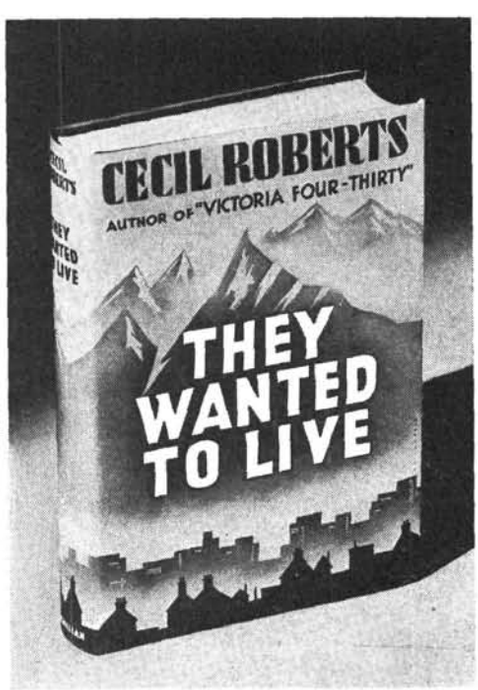
Another
"VICTORIA 4:30"!

THEY WANTED TO LIVE

By
CECIL ROBERTS

A PLOT-DESIGN as freshly different as in Mr. Roberts' previous novel, a story with the same mounting drama, and the central character, that James Brown, railway porter, who alone failed to board the Continental Express on its momentous trip across Europe.

Having won a sweepstakes, Brown at last is enabled to take his long-deferred honeymoon. Paris, Vienna, Budapest are on the itinerary arranged for him—and for the reader, who again has the impression of going along. By chance this couple, accustomed only to moderate circumstances, are thrown into association with the wealthy nobility. They tour the hectic nightclubs, visit a feudal Hungarian estate, become entangled in the Nazi drive—and arrive finally at a climax one will long remember.



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THE MACMILLAN COMPANY - NEW YORK

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Magazines under Goebbels

BY

FLETCHER PRATT

Illustrirte Zeitung

Danube motor-boat patrol. "The German parallels to our *Life* and *Look* . . . have a certain tone of strained emotional nationalism" . . .

IN a political sense Nazism and the German dictatorship seem already old as the hills, but literature moves more slowly, and as far as writing is concerned the movement is still a tot, whose future is unsure and apt to be regarded as either dubious or ridiculous. Certainly the literary prospects seem sufficiently ominous for a nation that places on the index expurgatorius such a range of writers as Thomas Mann, Werfel, Feuchtwanger, and all the others who have followed them into the refugee press. Assuredly there is something absurd about a government that issues cease and desist orders to the movie critics, or demands that its jokesmiths step up their production fifty per cent in a grand competition to prove to the world that its only pure Aryan race has a sense of humor. Yet if the eye is fixed on such events one will no more arrive at a complete estimate of the current German literary climate than one would by drawing a similar picture of the American mind from the "Americana" column of the *Mercury.*

Just as an examination of the files of the *Saturday Evening Post* or *Harpers* (for example) will give us a far clearer picture than the consideration of any series of random events, so we should be able to extract considerable information by a comparison of German magazines of past and present. It is, of course, particularly difficult to find a fair basis of comparison in the case of Germany. For years before Hitler, the publishing industry there, in common with others, suffered the effects of an economic depression more profound than any we have known. Before that was the war; its magazines, printed on inferior ersatz stock and filled with ersatz reading matter, are already on the way to the dust they deserve. And if one reaches back to pre-war days, the question of changing tastes complicates the comparison.

Yet comparison of the general German magazine output for the three periods—pre-war, post-war, and post-Hitler—shows certain general tendencies which appear to be independent of the shift of fashion. Of these the first to strike the eye is the enormous change in the advertising pages, and it is perhaps the most indicative of all. (See almost any magazines, but particularly those having some general appeal and with a history reaching back across the three periods—*Jugend,* for example, or *Hamburger Illustrierte.*) It is not merely that modern German magazines carry much less advertising of all kinds than they once did, while American, British, and French periodicals have increased the proportion of advertising to text. The character of this advertising has also undergone the most startling changes.

Before the war something like ninety per cent of the advertising space devoted to merchandise in Germany was occupied by appeals to buy various brands of six articles—chocolate, French champagnes, raincoats and other articles in rubber, cigarettes, fancy soaps, and revolvers. All six naturally disappeared from the advertising columns during the war, when blockade cut off supplies of materials for all but the revolvers, which were wanted for other purposes than sale to the public. Advertising for all but the French champagnes crept back gradually after the war; and of the five remaining, all but the cigarette advertising disappeared like the dropping of a curtain when the Third Reich came into power. Raincoats, revolvers, chocolate, and soap may still be sold beyond the Rhine in greater quantities than ever; but they are not advertised. (*Jugend,* a valuable index because of its long life, had eleven soap ads in January, 1908, five for French champagnes, six for chocolate, four for various rubber articles, four for cigarettes, and one—an exceptionally low number—for revolvers. In the same month of 1939 none of these articles was represented, unless the single corset ad the magazine carried could be considered a "rubber article." *Die Woche,* an equally valuable index because of its large circulation, had four ads for chocolate in 1929, none in 1939; cigarette advertising had fallen from three brands to none; rubber articles from two to none; soaps from five to two.

The space they used to occupy has been taken over by a whole group of new made-in-Germany chemical and mechanical products, guaranteed to make men strong and women beautiful. Skin creams have taken over the soap space; there are bust developers for women, both chemical and mechanical, moustache removers for ladies and moustache improvers for their husbands, an apparatus for correcting "X- and O-legs," hangover and headache curatives, and at least three different machines to make projecting ears lie down flat. The most striking feature in this parade to an American is perhaps the fact that there is not one single device for reducing any part of the body below the ears.

As compared with American magazines, automobile advertising is strikingly lacking; so is that (in the women's periodicals) of department stores and silk goods, in the men's, of tobacco, clothing, and shaving appliances; and in both of breakfast foods and private schools. Only in giving much space to publicity for toothpastes, laxatives, hotels, and cameras do the advertising pages in the two nations approximate each other. (See *Die Dame, Die Neue Linie, Elegante Welt*

Next Week

GOD'S VALLEY
By WILLSON WHITMAN
Reviewed by George Fort Milton

JUBAL TROOP
By PAUL H. WELLMAN
Reviewed by James Gray

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among women's magazines; *Fussball Illustrierte, Sportsgraphik,* and similar special magazines for men, and among the general magazines *Die Woche* and the illustrated journals mentioned below.)

As to the general character of the magazines, a glance at a rack of covers on a dealer's stand would give the impression that war, years, depression and Hitler had wrought few changes. The little Austrian magazines (*Der Junggesell,* for instance) with their pictures of stage beauties and slightly off-color jokes painstakingly translated from the French (and losing all point in the translation) are missing, to be sure, but they are no great loss. *Das Magazin,* the best in typography, largest in circulation, and most restrained in its humor, survives indeed, but is shorn of much of its brashness. Missing also are the big magazines running largely to popular fiction and light articles that blossomed out in imitation of this country during the post-war years. Indeed one of the most striking features of the German periodical landscape is the absence of almost any light fiction above the level of the dime novel. *Die Woche* still bravely publishes serials, *Schöne Roman* and *Wahre Geschichte* (about comparable with the upper cut of American pulps) still carry on, but that is about all. Even the newspaper feuilletons, where so much fiction used to appear, seem to have stopped, and in the illustrated weeklies the short short story has conquered all.

The explanation may be non-political and have to do with a case of changing taste. German literary reviews and booklists show about as much popular fiction being published in book form as there ever was, with a strong tendency toward the historical novel, which seems to be enjoying world-wide popularity. In the still lighter field of the humorous weeklies there has been increase rather than diminution, with three or four new publications *(Lachende Welt, Hamburger Blätter)* coming on to join the old favorites, *Simplicissimus, Jugend, Fliegende Blätter,* and *Lustige Blätter.*

To anyone unable to read these publications, or who read only one or two issues of each, there would seem no change whatever from the days before the war. There are the same front pages in three or four colors, the same centerspreads, also in color, elaborately illustrating mildly funny he-and-she jokes. There are the same line drawings on the other pages, accompanied by short jokes and short short stories sometimes humorous, sometimes Grand Guignol in character. The drawings have the same hyperbole in dealing with the human form and face; many of them are done by the same men who used to do them. There are even slight but interesting additions in the form of drawings by American

Lustige Blätter

Man who has been in an automobile accident and is due at a fancy dress ball: "Good idea, nurse, I'll go as a Sultan!"

cartoonists (including at least two well known non-Aryans), reprinted from the *New Yorker* and *Esquire.*

But three or four issues of any of these magazines in succession leave one with a sense of vacuity, of lacking intellectual process. There are in them jokes about women getting sun-tanned, about lazy women, about mothers-in-law, peasant stupidity, henpecked husbands, bashful beaux, falling through the ice, clumsy hunters, boastful but unsuccessful athletes. They have, in fact, the same range of humor that is permitted to the Hollywood movies, with the exception that Hollywood jokes about cheese which is never a funny subject to a German. And they seem to have the same range of taboos that the Hollywood censorship has imposed upon itself. There are few jests about adultery or sex in any form; there are none about social classes or industrial groups (say bondholders, firemen, or barbers); none about races or nationalities, and of course none about politics.

The list of taboos is, in a way, surprising. One would hardly expect a regime possessing dictatorial powers over the press to encourage or to permit itself to be lampooned, in spite of the example of Frederick the Great's "billboards at eye-level on each principal thoroughfare, where cartoons against the government may be posted." But one would expect that intensely ingrown German dictatorship to permit lesser breeds without the law to be the object of jokes. One would expect that the homeland of Kubin, Heinrich Kley, and the most biting international political satire of pre-war days would have something to say about the Chamberlain umbrella, Mr. Blum's moustache, or Mr. Roosevelt's frontier on the Rhine. Not a drawing, not a line, not a word. As far as German humorous magazines are concerned, foreign politics are as holy a subject as home society.

And by that token there is no satire, which is essentially an attack on things established somewhere even if not before the reader's eyes. The censored German magazines, like the censored movies, have nothing to say but what can be said to a twelve-year-old, and has long since been said to most of them.

There has been a noticeable increase in the number of illustrated magazines with short articles surrounding a set of reportorial photographs, but this is, once more, probably a world-wide tendency; the same thing is happening over here. Perhaps it is slightly more marked in Germany where the form has long been a popular one; at all events any German newsstand will be found crowded with *Hamburger Illustrierte, J. B. Illustrierter Beobachter, Münchner Illustrierte Presse,* in addition to the old stand-by, *Illustrirte Zeitung.* The German parallels to our *Life* and *Look,* however, have a certain tone of strained emotional nationalism, very remarkable, not dissimilar to the accent one catches in Der Führer's speeches.

"Joyously and proudly," says the caption on *Illustrirte Zeitung's* set of photos of the Danube motor-boat patrol, "these sailors do the duty for which they have been brought from ships on the sea or from the shore establishments of the North Sea and Baltic. The Ostmark sees them and realizes that with the Anschluss into the Reich it has won back its outlet to the ocean, and that by this means it can take part in the great future of our race, which is expressed in the motto 'Man must fare the sea or die!' "

This note of passionate politicalism runs all through the popular illustrated periodicals, and contrasts strangely with the tone the strictly literary press has taken on under dictatorship as one finds it in such literary reviews as *Die Literatur, Bücherkunde,* and *Literarische Flugblätter.* For these latter, it is true, the exiled authors have simply ceased to exist; they are never mentioned. There is also a certain querulous note whenever French literature is mentioned, a sign that the nation is in one of those recurring periods when its part in the Latin cultural heritage is indignantly repudiated. In fact references to foreign standards of performance or criticism are generally either to Shakespeare, Ibsen, Holberg, or Brandes. The same rejection of the Latin but acceptance of the Anglo-Scandinavian is evident in another way. Advertising and reviews of foreign books translated into German mention almost exclusively works from English or the Scandinavian. "An American Doctor's Odyssey" receives wide praise and is now in its 24th thousand; "Man the Unknown" is doing nearly as well, and so is Isak Dinesen's African journal. In the reviews

(*Continued on page* 14)

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War and the Average Man

ORDEAL. By Nevil Shute. New York: William Morrow & Co. 1939. $2.50.

Reviewed by BEN RAY REDMAN

PETER CORBETT and his wife, Joan, had spent a quiet domestic evening, discussing their coming holiday, listening to the radio, and playing cards. After reading in bed for a while, they put out the light at about half past eleven. "The first bomb fell soon after that, before midnight."

England, so far as they knew, was not at war and they could only guess at the nationality of the planes that were flying soundlessly high above Southampton and its suburbs; but there was no doubt that Peter and Joan and their three children were being bombed. The first explosion was followed by almost a thousand more, in a raid that lasted three hours. The Corbetts took refuge in the garage (having less fear of its flimsy walls than of the house) and got through the night. The morning brought news: practically every town in the Midlands and in the South of England had suffered as severely as Southampton; the raids had been a complete surprise, and the bombers had come and gone without interference.

"Ordeal" is the story of the Corbett family during the first weeks of a war that was the more terrible for being so mysterious. Peter and those like him had no idea of what was really happening or going to happen. Official information was disturbingly meager. No army movements were reported and nothing was heard of the Fleet. All that the man in the street knew was that he and his were being mercilessly bombed on every cloudy night, and that the Air Force was supposedly carrying out satisfactory "reprisals." There were a dozen ways of joining up, of course, but a chap had to think of his family. Or so Peter decided. How could he better serve his country, at first, than by getting Joan and the children to a place of safety? After that was done, he could volunteer with a clear conscience.

Mr. Shute traces the hesitant and baffled steps towards safety in a matter-of-fact, entirely convincing style that stems from the school of Defoe. Until fear of cholera uproots them, the Corbetts try to camp out in their semi-detached and now windowless house, with a garden trench and their automobile above it as an air raid shelter. Then, when the sanitary cordon has been broken by an angry mob, they move to their little cutter yacht, anchored off Hamble, some six miles from the city. When the bombs fall uncomfortably close again, and the problem of obtaining milk for the baby becomes increasingly desperate, they think of the Isle of Wight and make a run for Wootton creek, only to be warned off by special constables with rifles, who tell the refugees that they come from an infected area and must show a bill of health. For a time it seems as if they are indeed at sea, with no port open to them, but by devious ways and through various adventures they at last reach the goal that Peter has been holding in mind. At Brest, Joan and the children board a ship for Canada, and he is free to risk his life in uniform.

Granted his subject, it would have been easy for Mr. Shute to write a highly exciting and affecting story. He has chosen instead to write one that is simply credible and absorbing. He has held his imagination on a short rein and eschewed dramatic effects no less than horror. While avoiding sensationalism, he has also avoided many sensations that would seem proper to his narrative. He has never raised his voice above the level of the calm, factual reporter (the outbreak of cholera is announced in a tone that would serve to inform us of a case of mumps next door) and he has felt no need of "developing" his characters. Dr. Gordon's death moves us no more than would the sight of an unknown name in an obituary column, and Collins's crash has no personal meaning for us. We hear the bombs but are not terrified. Mr. and Mrs. Littlejohn are types that threaten, for a moment, to become individuals; but they are only sketches. The children are only names. And Peter and Joan, themselves, are scarcely more.

In view of all this, it would be easy to conclude that Mr. Shute's determined "under-writing" had kept him from realizing the potentialities of his theme. But this would be to condemn him for not doing something that he has not attempted. He has chosen to make us think rather than feel, and to that end he has written his story as economically as possible, in the commonest terms that would serve his purpose. It is because Peter and Joan are no more than a nice young couple that they can stand for all nice young couples similarly fated. They are significant not as individuals, not as a novelist's contrived characters, but as symbols. In "Ordeal," Mr. Shute has written the story of all Joans and Peters; written it with complete success, according to the pattern of his intention. Readers who ask for more power and more passion, for the shrill scream of horror and the ache of tragedy, will be asking for something he did not mean to give.

"Ordeal" has its moral, and it is explicit, voiced by the douanier at Brest. "Once in the history of the world," said the Frenchman, "this had to be tried, this blind bombing of the towns. But, M'sieur, I tell you this certainly—it has lost the war for them. This time, they will suffer a defeat and be smashed utterly. After that, I do not think that any Power will dare do such things again." The faith of the douanier is enviable, at least.

Timely Fantasy

OVER THE MOUNTAIN. By Ruthven Todd. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1939. $2.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE STEVENS

IN a curious way, this timely fantasy has something of the same appeal and flavor as "Lost Horizon." Curious, because the mythical land into which Michael, the hero of "Over the Mountain," ventures is just the reverse of James Hilton's Utopian lamasery. In this story, unscalable peaks hem in the small, dull, happy country where Michael lives —a sort of insulated Switzerland—and no one has ever got outside. A few intrepid souls have died on the mountain; the only flyer who crosses comes back insane. Michael, impelled by the urge of a Columbus, succeeds in an excitingly written feat of mountaineering, and arrives in a fascist country—fascist in the Italian rather than the German manner. At first lionized, then exploited, Michael is soon on the run from the secret police.

A mixture of political satire and well-written adventure, Mr. Todd's first novel has points in common not only with

On the other side, fascism (from the jacket of "Over the Mountain").

James Hilton as aforesaid, but with H. G. Wells, and more closely with Rex Warner, who wrote "The Wild Goose Chase" and "The Professor." If it says nothing new about fascism—which would be a tall order, anyhow—it presents some original devices which the current dictators have fortunately overlooked; and if it never cuts very deep, it moves fast and is consistently entertaining. Even if you don't ordinarily like fantasies, you'll find that this one makes no strain on credulity and never goes foggy at the edges. Mr. Todd is another young English novelist with something on the ball.

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H. H. Richardson's New Musical Novel

THE YOUNG COSIMA. By Henry Handel Richardson. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 1939. $2.50.

Reviewed by MARCIA DAVENPORT

A GOOD musical novel is so great a rarity that the few which hold permanent places in literature are peculiarly distinguished, important, and memorable. One of these is "Maurice Guest," the work of an artist in fiction who is so fortunate as to be able, if she wishes, to labor years on end without hastening into print. This great talent, sensitivity, assiduity, and thoroughness have produced the finest existing picture of pre-war musical life in Leipzig ("Maurice Guest"); they then turned from music to a vaster field to create the monumental saga of the author's homeland, in the Australian trilogy, "The Fortunes of Richard Mahony"; and Henry Handel Richardson now offers the fruit of her most recent decade's work in "The Young Cosima," a novel which tells the story of Cosima Liszt von Bülow's life up to the moment of her flight to Richard Wagner. This is one of those true stories more strange and fascinating than anything a novelist could invent. Miss Richardson has been able here to lay aside the burden of "original" invention, and devote herself entirely to the characterization, and to the teeming play of imagination and human emotion, at which she has already proved herself such a powerful artist.

It is clear from the first richly colored page that Henry Handel Richardson has explored every cranny wherein she might find a scrap of information on her subject. She plunges at once into the first of a series of portraits (this of Liszt, and the next of Bülow) which are the more remarkable because of their biographical authenticity within their fictional frame. She chose the medium of the novel only, it appears, in order to give herself leeway in which to expound and explore the motives and the souls of the characters; and also, of course, in order to free them to speak through her masterly dialogue. Otherwise she has written pure history: history not only of a time, an art, and of events unbelievable but for their living proofs; but history valuable as few historical novels can lay claim to being. For rarely, if ever, has a writer lavished such pains on the recreation of baffling and complicated souls as Miss Richardson on the two characters of Cosima and Richard Wagner, and to a scarcely lesser degree on the twisted and agonized personalities of Liszt and the cruelly betrayed Hans von Bülow. Above all, the compelling yet repellent genius of Richard Wagner burns with a blinding glare, thus explaining the actions of a woman who should have been the last of all to throw herself into his arms. The slow, unrelenting development of this character, and the steady pressure that shaped it to the fanaticism into which it finally crystallized, are set forth so masterfully that no student of this human phenomenon could possibly lay the book down, having begun it; and no ordinary reader, looking for beautiful and fluent writing, and for an enthralling story, would want to.

Beyond this, the mass of fact and detail, so exhaustively studied, so well digested, and so brilliantly recast, only confirm what many of us have long known and said, despite Miss Richardson's too-limited public: that she is one of the really great and serious novelists working today, and that everything she

Henry Handel Richardson: "She has the precious dual gifts of restraint and eloquence" . . .

does has true stature and permanence. There is an austerity in her writing as welcome as the strong planes of classic architecture; her enthusiasms when she releases them are all mature and deep-founded emotions; she has the precious dual gifts of restraint and eloquence; she is wise; she works extremely slowly to the effect that her results are ripe and profound. Her equipment for writing in the field of music and its artists is enviable. This kind of authenticity cannot be simulated, it must be lived, genuinely and protractedly.

Of very few musical novels, if any, can it be said that they will take their places on library shelves as integral parts of the definitive literature on some serious subject. But that will surely be the well-deserved fate of "The Young Cosima." It it a good novel now and should enjoy the current rewards of that distinction. It will be a good book, cited and studied, for a long time.

Marcia Davenport is the author of "Mozart," a biography, and "Of Lena Geyer," a musical novel.

Hungarian Holiday

THEY WANTED TO LIVE. By Cecil Roberts. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1939. $2.50.

Reviewed by RICHARD A. CORDELL

CECIL ROBERTS'S new novel, the first since his popular "Victoria Four-Thirty," has been a best seller in London for two months and will no doubt find many readers in this country. Mr. Roberts's books are written with such buoyancy and good humor, they are so unpretentious and gay that they disarm serious criticism from the start. "They Wanted to Live" shares with "Victoria Four-Thirty," "Pamela's Spring Song," and "Spears against Us" a sound virtue—readability. Cecil Roberts is not among the great stylists of our day (although there are some fine stretches in his charming books on the English countryside), but he writes with facility and zest, and his easy prose accommodates the swing of his narrative.

"They Wanted to Live" is the story of a few exciting months in the life of Jim Brown, the handsome young porter of "Victoria Four-Thirty." Suddenly enriched by a football pool dividend, he marries his waitress-sweetheart (she is uncomfortably reminiscent of the detestable Mildred Rogers in "Of Human Bondage"), and takes his bride to the Continent for the honeymoon of his dreams. These babes-in-the-woods are immediately involved in a series of adventures, aided and abetted by Mr. Waddle, a Dickensian eccentric devoted to folk-dance congresses, some suave Hungarian aristocrats borrowed from Molnar's stage, and some Austrian refugees. Mr. Roberts is always much interested in his scene—his novels often remind one of the local color fiction of a generation ago—and in "They Wanted to Live" he makes the most of his opportunities. The author's knowledge and love of Central Europe—its wines and sauces, its timetables, highways, and airports, its cafés and country inns—give to this romance a measure of credibility as well as color and vitality.

Mark Twain wrote to Andrew Lang in 1889: "The critic assumes, every time, that if a book doesn't meet the cultivated-class standard, it isn't valuable . . . his law . . . requires Whitcomb Riley to sing no more till he can sing like Shakespeare. . . . If a critic should start a religion it would not have any object but to convert angels: and they wouldn't need it." Cecil Roberts's stories of medium-high adventure do not illuminate life or reflect its complexity; they are designed merely to entertain the average literate, but not too exacting, reader, and they rarely fail to provide this entertainment.

Richard A. Cordell is on the faculty of Purdue University.

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Life and Opinions

SEMI-CENTENNIAL. By Leonard Bacon. New York: Harper & Bros. 1939. $3.50.

Reviewed by J. P. MARQUAND

DURING a conference in London of scholars and writers of the English language Sir Israel Gollancz inquired of Leonard Bacon: "Who are you?"

"I suppose I might," writes Mr. Bacon, "have replied like Tristram Shandy to the customs man: 'Don't puzzle me.' Instead between irritation and amusement, I answered: 'A comic Poet.'"

This is not an adequate description of Leonard Bacon, who is a man of the world, of ideas and of letters, and fortunately he goes much further in describing himself and his reactions to various individuals, environments, and points of view in his entertaining and often brilliant autobiography entitled "Semi-Centennial, Some of the Life and Part of the Opinions of Leonard Bacon." At the end of his book he speaks of poetry and describes his own creative efforts and his probably vain reaching toward some humanly great thought which he hopes he may incarnate in inevitable and indestructible words.

"I may never think that thought," he concludes, "or discover those words. But if you have had a better time than I have had trying, you've had a damned good one."

These quotations reveal the spirit of Mr. Bacon's work and a good deal of Mr. Bacon himself. Unlike so many of his wearier contemporaries, he has had a good time living and working and not a smugly self-satisfied time, either, as might be feared when one begins his narration. Moreover, nearly everyone who follows him through the last five chaotic decades will have a good time also; in fact, "a damned good time," which, when one comes to think it over, is an odd way for a poet to put it. Incidentally, he has no sympathy whatever for the sad posings of what is now known as "The Lost Generation." "I belong to that generation myself," he explains, "and it has only got a mild dyspepsia due to over-indulgence."

When Leonard Bacon woke up one morning and found that he was fifty, this round number gave rise to the autobiographical impulse. He evidently wrote it all down while the mood lasted, informally, conversationally, and epigrammatically. He has achieved a frank and an individualistic picture of changing America and Europe, seen through the eyes of a cultivated, enthusiastic scholar born to the best New England academic tradition. He introduces briskly, with hardly a pause for breath, his family and his ancestors and draws sketch upon sketch of his boyhood, youth, and middle-age. He takes you with him through his wretched gangling school days at St. George's and through his eager, callow years at Yale where he and Sinclair Lewis heeled (if that is the right way to put it) for the "*Lit.*" He reveals his enthusiasms, youthful and mature, for the great books he has read, and does his best to make you see what he saw in the faculties of two great universities and in his friendship and acquaintance with platoons of poets and writers and other interesting people.

The shuttle of his life moves with bewildering speed out to California, across the water, to Italy and France, back to the beech woods and the balmy air of

Leonard Bacon in Hawaii

Rhode Island, down to New Orleans and Nicaragua (Mr. Bacon says he owns more boa constrictors today than any other poet), back to a plantation in the deep South, with a ranch in Montana thrown in somewhere between, and then, for a more extended stay, to the University of California. He takes you through the war, where he was an unhappy shavetail in Washington and San Diego, back east and off for a nervous breakdown with Dr. Jung, back home again after a swing around the European circle, and then off to Florence to a villa in Fiesole. But always the journeys end where he started, in Rhode Island. He has seen Rupert Brooke and Shaw and Lord Balfour and Pupin and the Sitwells.

As might be expected from a narrator of Mr. Bacon's positive personality, some readers will find annoying elements in his style. One wishes he would not refer to the world as the "planet" and to a great many of the individuals he encounters as "creatures." Pupin, for instance, is "a taking creature"; Jung "the most remarkable animal I have ever known at all well." On occasions it is surprising also that a writer of Mr. Bacon's gifts should not give more accurate impressions of what he describes. Frequently he fails to emphasize those small details, insignificant in themselves, which experienced narrators employ in effectively creating the picture of a person or a scene. He contents himself too often by saying that the great men he has known have unplumbed reservoirs of learning and vital flaming minds, and lets it go at that. Europe and America are so clear in his own memory that he is inclined to sketch in his cities and his countries hastily and carelessly. The towns in Provence, for instance, he sets down as "improbable." He uses the same adjective for the toucan birds in the tropics. One gets the impression that he is viewing life from the sheltered security of an academic ivory tower, but just when one is discouraged a passage will crop up that has intense vividness. The tropical jungle, and the Yale Club in New York at the time of the false Armistice, are two of a great many. Sometimes his epigrams fall flat also, though there are a lot that don't. It is a man of the so-called "privileged" class who has made the most of his opportunities, who has dealt cheerfully and sensibly with his life. It is not everyone who can look back upon an active career with the same satisfaction as Mr. Bacon can, and appear as anxious to cope with his next fifty years as though he had not already lived through fifty. Anyone can tell that "Semi-Centennial" is a book which he enjoyed writing. This reader, for one, though he started it doubting the usefulness of such an effort, enjoyed the experiences and opinions of a thoughtful and humorous American.

Political Melodrama

TRAITOR'S WAY. By Bruce Hamilton. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1939. $2.

THIS is an engrossing story of present-day England in which an average man becomes innocently involved in a fascist conspiracy. At the conclusion of a political meeting which breaks up with a riot, Noel Mason, an innocent bystander, is arrested for clubbing a policeman in an effort to protect himself from being trampled by the policeman's horse. He is subsequently imprisoned in Dartmoor, from which he makes his escape by holding up a lost motorist.

After confiscating the man's clothes and valise, Mason discovers a series of documents purporting to surrender England into the hands of a dictator. The major portion of the narrative is concerned with Mason's melodramatic efforts to get the documents into the right hands, and to expose the conspiracy. His flight and pursuit by the agents of totalitarianism on the one hand, and the police on the other, make a swift and exciting piece of fiction.

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The Saturday Review
of Literature

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Pollyanna and Cassandra

WHENEVER the state of book reviewing comes up for general discussion, the usual complaint is that reviewers are too easily pleased, too lenient, too free with big words like genius and masterpiece. Attacks on dramatic critics, on the other hand, customarily arise on the opposite ground, that they are cynical and fault-finding; incapable of appreciating the good, the true, and the beautiful; more interested in their own cleverness than in the plays they are supposed to review.

It is easy to see why this should be so. In the first place, a dramatic critic, in the course of a New York season, has to see every play that gets produced, including the good ones, the mediocrities, and all the ineptitudes which run for a night or two and leave everyone wondering how they got put on the stage at all. The daily book columnist covers only a small fraction of the publishing output; he is obliged to pick and choose, and naturally he picks the books which have some reason for existence; the ineptitudes are passed over entirely. For this and other reasons, it always seems—as Heywood Broun recently said—that dramatic critics speak with the voice of Cassandra, book reviewers with the voice of Pollyanna.

That being the general impression, it would be natural if habitual readers of book reviews took enthusiasm with a grain of salt, while addicts of dramatic criticism, less accustomed to superlatives, took them at their face value. Such, indeed, seems to be the case. While it is true that "Abie's Irish Rose" and "Tobacco Road" succeeded in spite of bad notices, there are few if any famous instances where a play has failed in spite of rave notices, although it happens quite often that a book will be enthusiastically reviewed and still make an indifferent impression on the public.

Presumably no one would deny that the current success of Lillian Hellman's play, "The Little Foxes," results very largely from the reviews. Richard Watts in the *Herald Tribune* spoke for the majority when he called it "a grim, bitter, and merciless study . . . another fine and important American drama." Brooks Atkinson in the *Times* was more reserved; he found "The Little Foxes" "a deliberate exercise in malice—melodramatic rather than tragic . . . and presided over by a Pinero frown of fustian morality." But Mr. Atkinson spoke for a minority, and even he called the drama "an adult horror play." One who went to "The Little Foxes" prepared for something that would stand up with O'Neill at his best, and came away from it with even more reservations than Mr. Atkinson, wondered whether all the enthusiasm lavished on Miss Hellman's play was enthusiasm by contrast, so to speak—the result of a month's lull in the dramatic season that made "The Little Foxes" look better than it was. And we wondered what the book columnists would have thought of it, during a season which has brought novels by William Faulkner, J. P. Marquand, Pearl Buck, James Boyd (to mention a few almost at random).

Perhaps the dramatic critics are really as easy to please as the book reviewers. Perhaps the words masterpiece and genius mean just as much in one field as in the other. In any event, the point of this discussion is that we tend to consider books and plays as belonging in separate watertight compartments, because they are reviewed by two different groups of critics. We read articles, even books, on American literature that make no mention of the drama; we read other articles and books on American drama which do not relate their subject to the stream of literature. Is American fiction today, with Willa Cather and Ellen Glasgow, Sinclair Lewis and Ernest Hemingway, Kenneth Roberts and J. P. Marquand, William Faulkner and John Steinbeck, more vigorous and more interesting than American drama, with Eugene O'Neill and Clifford Odets, Paul Green and Irwin Shaw, George Kaufman and Marc Connelly, Sidney Howard and Robert Sherwood, Philip Barry and Elmer Rice? Surely there is a living relationship between the two fields, but no one writes of them in synthesis. Do dramatic critics read novels? Do book reviewers see plays? The general public does both, and there is much to be said for discussing fiction and drama from a common point of view.

Portrait of a Bulwark

BY RAYMOND HOLDEN

LOVE for his fellows is so strong in him
He cannot risk it on a fellow's whim
But keeps it housed, behind a bony gate,
Watched by the snarling of the small dog hate.
He loves the poor, and so works fiercely hard
To punish those among them who retard—
By being hungry, thievish, coarse and weak—
The noble meekness of the better meek.
He loves the law, and uses it to do
His conscience' bidding—when it bids him sue;
Yet they who would invoke it for mankind
He thinks can have but treason in the mind.
He thinks that learning is a sacred trust
And so would shield it from the rabble's lust.
He knows that things made pleasant are but toys
And so he traffics sparingly with joys.
Beauty's skin-deep, he knows, her cult a sin;
So he slays beauty, though he saves the skin.
He loves his country's heritage, as its voters,
Yet looks askance at Constitution-quoters;
For after all, once freed from its old gloom,
No decent man will talk about the womb.
He is for freedom, but you'll hear him say,
"Freedom's too precious to be given away."
And "Render unto Caesar," means to him
That only profit fills a man with vim.
He holds so dear man's right to feed himself
That he would fight to lock the cupboard shelf.
And, though he calls the Bible, "The Good Book"
It rather scares him when he takes a look.
He is not sure that in this time and place
It can be wise to let the populace
Believe the Gospels should be swallowed whole.
It would be safer, while the "isms" roll,
If one suggested to the public mind
That maybe Pilate has been much maligned.

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Letters to the Editor: *Poets and Critics; Beginning Writers*

Poetasters and Criticasters

SIR:—One of the few magazines that have come my way out here in the West Indies contained a critique of recent poetry. Oh, but a most dogmatic critique! "Poetaster" was the kindest epithet to be hoped for by the author of any of the books considered. My impression was that the critic was so antagonistic to anything in verse form that I wondered why he was permitted to review anything more imaginative than a book of logarithms. Dropping a tear for the victims, I put down the magazine and looked out into the Caribbean night where the fireflies were making Roman candles among the coco palms. And this is what I thought:

POETS AND CRITICS

Each firefly in hope of fame
Attempts to set the world aflame;
But jealous imps with watchful eyes
Keep snuffing out these fireflies.

I won't say that "I hold no brief for the poets," for I do, claiming, moreover, to be the first man to admit that he "held a brief" for anything. I don't think that poets should be coddled, but I feel that if their books are worth reviewing they should be honestly reviewed by understanding critics,—even by poetry-lovers rather than by poetry-haters.

ARTHUR GUITERMAN.

Montego Bay,
Jamaica, B.W.I.

None Are

SIR:—In Bernard DeVoto's review of "My Cousin Mark Twain" he says, "None of the anecdotes *are* very good," etc. Perhaps the rule has changed since I went to school so that now he "are" right and I "are" mistaken.

MARGARET H. KRUKE.

Dearborn, Mich.

H. W. Fowler says in "Modern English Usage": "It is a mistake to suppose that the pronoun [none] is singular only and must at all costs be followed by singular verbs &c.; the OED explicitly states that plural construction is commoner."—Ed.

"The Story Writer"

SIR:—Although only a scribbling novice, I cannot refrain from paying tribute to Stephen Vincent Benét for his delightful and sensible review of Edith Mirrielees's "The Story Writer," in your edition of March 11th. To find such a refreshing review from a writer of Mr. Benét's ability, is indeed both a pleasure and inspiration.

As I say, I'm just a scribbling novice, at present studying through the Extension Division of the University of Missouri; and I am wondering if by any chance, Mr. Benét could have been ever connected with that institution. Certainly his ideas distinctly coincide with the philosophical dogma there. And in these days when writers' magazines are filled to the brim with ads almost promising to make a "writer out of you in five easy lessons," it is indeed a godsend to have such inspiring sources as Mr. Benét, Miss Mirrielees, and the University of Missouri's staff, who are willing and anxious to tell us poor struggling "would-bes" the truth and nothing but the truth—without sugar-coating it. . . . "For in the end it is your own laborious practice, your own deep-seated desire, and your own material, when you find it, that will make you a writer . . . not any book, any course, or any single criticism."

To these leaders, I, like countless other serious budding authors, am sincerely grateful and indebted for their excellent advice and inspiration. To them we pay tribute; and may we prove worthy of their enthusiastic endeavors.

RUTH M. BASSETT.

Mansfield, Conn.

"Hey, Butch, here's a Frank Merriwell. Gee, he was my boyhood ideal."

Griffin and Keats

SIR:—Gerald Griffin, Irish poet and novelist, writing to his sister in June, 1825, had something to say which may be of interest to Keats lovers.

London, June 21, 1825.

My dearest Lucy:— . . . I think it probable I may some of these days become acquainted with the young sister of poor Keats the poet, as she is coming to spend some time with a friend of mine. If I do, I will send you an account of her. My Spanish friend, Valentine Llanos, was intimate with him, and spoke with him three days before he died. I am greatly interested about that family. Keats you must know was in love, and the lady whom he was to have married, had he survived Gifford's (the butcher) review, attended him to the last. She is a beautiful young creature, but now wasted away to a skeleton, and will follow him shortly I believe. She and his sister say they have oft found him, on suddenly entering the room, with that review in his hand, reading as if he would devour it—completely absorbed—absent, and drinking it in like mortal poison. The instant he observed anybody near him, however, he would throw it by, and begin to talk of some indifferent matter. The book displays great genius, but, unfortunately, it afforded one or two passages capable of being twisted to the purpose of a malignant wretch of a reviewer, such as Gifford is, with much effect.

Dearest Lucy, affectionately yours,
Gerald Griffin.

Later, July 17, 1826, Griffin writes in a letter to his sister, Ellen:

I spent a very pleasant evening the other day with the sister of John Keats, his intended bride (as beautiful, elegant, and accomplished a girl as any, or more so, than any I have seen here) and the husband of the former who is an old friend of mine.

BROTHER C. PHILIP, F.S.C.

Manhattan College,
New York City.

Happens

SIR:—I beg to differ with Mr. Stephen Vincent Benét in his use of the overworked word "happens" in his review of "Wickford Point" (*SRL*—March 18). With all due respect to such a manipulator of our American language as the author of "John Brown's Body," it seems too bad that he should fall into such a trap. (If he has fallen.) "Happens" as defined in the dictionary is to occur or to take place. Therefore, Mr. Marquand occurs to be a real writer or takes place to be a real writer. Usage has given "happens" a rather unexpected - event - taking - place meaning. It has also made the word a convenient padding for sentences. Does Mr. Marquand happen to be a writer or is he one? Despite his varied touch is it pure chance that he can write novels that charm the American public? Not setting myself up as a judge of literature or the English language, I ask out of curiosity.

L. W. LEWIS.

Philadelphia, Pa.

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"Families, I Hate You!"

Roger Martin du Gard's Cyclic Novel

THE THIBAULTS. By Roger Martin du Gard. Translated by Stuart Gilbert. New York: The Viking Press. 1939. $3.

Reviewed by JUSTIN O'BRIEN

RARELY has a winner of the Nobel Prize for literature so richly deserved that honor as Roger Martin du Gard. The French Academy can be excused for neglecting him, as for ignoring André Gide, since to don its green livery and sit under its dome a writer must present his own candidature, and neither of these two old friends has sought that official consecration. But the Swedish Academy, which moves on its own impulse, can reward in the divine manner.

Even now, after a career of thirty years, Martin du Gard remains faithful to the attitude of his first hero who said: "As for literature, write if you wish; but for God's sake don't talk about it." It is in great part because of this dislike for personal publicity that his work has not achieved a wider recognition outside of France. Like Marcel Proust, he first fully revealed his talent on the eve of the World War with a substantial novel. Popular acclaim did not come, however, until the publication, stretching over the years from 1922 to 1936, of the ten volumes of "Les Thibault," the first four of which appeared in this country in a translation by Madeleine Boyd that for some reason was not continued. The present new and very satisfactory translation by Stuart Gilbert includes the first seven volumes; the remaining part, for which the French had to wait seven years, is promised for the fall. This work, great in both quantity and quality, marks the height of its author's achievement. The first and best of the many cyclic novels popular in France since the war, "The Thibaults" is superior also to that earlier model, Romain Rolland's "Jean-Christophe."

Perhaps the work's chief distinction lies in the fact that it is a pure novel—that is, one which aims to represent life rather than to reflect upon it. Martin du Gard has been compared to Tolstoy for his breadth of vision and creation of atmosphere, to Zola and Flaubert for his precise documentation and rigid objectivity. The ascetic regime he followed for so many years at Bellême, writing a regular number of hours every day in a room lined with reference works and filing cases, recalls the arduous life of Flaubert, the hermit of Croisset, whom he resembles moreover in his willingness to destroy completed manuscripts and rewrite the same volume four or five times. In his early paleographical and archeological study at the Ecole des Chartes he acquired a scholarly method which makes of his work the result of a unique collaboration between the historian and the novelist. Yet for all that he possesses the true artist's faculty for synthesis which protects him from being blinded by the individual as Jules Romains often is, in whose work documentation too frequently substitutes for creation. Or one has only to compare "The Thibaults" with that pale imitation of it that is being written by Louis Aragon. Roger Martin du Gard differs from all his contemporaries, besides, in that his style is an absence of style. In an age of literary affectation, he has written with such directness and limpidity that not even the slightest film interposes itself between the reader and the life whose unfolding he follows with passionate interest.

The reality of that life, throbbing and multiform, strikes one from the very first page of "The Thibaults" with its sudden projection of the reader into the drama of Jacques's and Daniel's flight from home. The gradual revelation of the various personalities within the Thibault and Fontanin families becomes so absorbing that not until a second reading does one notice the author's skillful use of the multiple plot that Gide and Huxley were later to borrow in "The Counterfeiters" and "Point Counter Point." Jérôme de Fontanin's many infidelities, Jenny's illness and the Christian Science healer's intervention, Antoine's reactions to his father's pomposity, all in the first chapters, seize the reader's attention. The rest of the novel contains no disappointment: Antoine's improvised operation on a little girl (already included in French anthologies) and his passionate love-affair with Rachel, Daniel's philanderings in the manner of his father, Jacques's sufferings in the reformatory and tender love for Jenny, Antoine's daring effort to shorten his father's death agony, are passages which show the author's mastery of situations and emotions. At once the reader establishes direct contact with the characters.

For over fifteen years Martin du Gard has lived in seclusion with the same characters, whose number, in view of the extent of the novel, is remarkably small—only ten or a dozen of major importance. As Daniel, now a young painter, says in the still untranslated portion of "The Thibaults": "Everything I have learned I have drawn from the tenacious study of a single model. Why change? You do much better work when you force yourself to return constantly to the same starting-point, when each time you have to start all over again and go further in the same direction. If I had been a novelist, I think that instead of changing my characters with each book I should have attached myself indefinitely to the same

Florent Margaritis

Roger Martin du Gard

ones, in order to dig deeper." This passage, the only one in which a character speaks for the author, reveals Martin du Gard's method. Combining a taste for vast constructions and a lively sense of individual qualities, he still does not claim to reconstruct all of contemporary life in the manner of Balzac or Jules Romains. Rather he gives, under the name of one of them, the history of two families during about a dozen pre-war years. Though these families, one Catholic and the other Protestant, represent a large section of the Parisian *bourgeoisie*, the author in no way uses them as symbols. In "The Counterfeiters" André Gide likewise depicts the dissolution of two families of the same class, one Catholic and the other Protestant, and the dedication of that novel to Roger Martin du Gard implies a recognition of his debt, fully acknowledged elsewhere.

The debt is however mutual, as is evident from the unforgettable description (in Part Three, Chapter 1 of "The Thibaults") of Daniel de Fontanin's discovery of Gide's "Nourritures terrestres." That breviary of revolt and self-expression gave Daniel the courage to be himself. It may well have furnished also the starting-point for "The Thibaults," since the novel's major theme is that of evasion with the idea of revolt either expressed or implied. Jacques Thibault constantly burns with a peculiarly Gidian gemlike flame. After his first unsuccessful flight with Daniel at fourteen, followed by a period of calm smouldering, he makes another break for freedom, this time fully successful, years later; and his last act, after the outbreak of the war, is to attempt to soar above the horrible reality into the ideological. Rachel's mysterious departure for Africa to join a man she fears provides another example of evasion. Gide himself has hardly more often illustrated his doctrine of fervor

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and unrest leading to a salutary uprooting of body and mind. Nor has he, in *his* chronicle of the liquidation of two families, more vigorously translated into action his early sentiment: "Families, I hate you! Closed circles around the hearth! Fast shut doors . . ." Gide has unquestionably influenced, and in turn been influenced by, Martin du Gard, thus proving the truth of his contention that literary influence does not create but rather awakens. Even if Gide had never existed (which God forbid) Roger Martin du Gard would still be one of the few truly great modern writers of French prose. As a picture of French life or a study of two families in disintegration, as a novel of adolescence or a novel of evasion, "The Thibaults" has already won a place among the great works of fiction.

Justin O'Brien is assistant professor of French at Columbia.

Science and Cézanne

THE ART OF CÉZANNE. By Albert C. Barnes and Violette de Mazia. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1939. $5.

Reviewed by MILTON W. BROWN

THE Barnes Foundation with laudable perseverance is still attempting to introduce the scientific method into art-history. This volume is the latest contribution to its effort. However, the concept of the scientific in art is highly debatable. This mechanical transference of the laboratory technique to art, in spite of its undeniable value, may lead to regrettable distortions and misconceptions, for not only is the work of art an extremely complex object, but the routine and the apparatus of analysis are variable. For example, when the authors attempt a judgment as to the relative technical efficiency of one painting in relation to another, or Cézanne's style as contrasted with that of Renoir, they apply a standard which is closer to prejudice than to science. They assume the painting of the Venetian Renaissance to be the highest expression of the art of painting: an obviously questionable proposition. And although they realize the complete subservience of Cézanne's technique to his general artistic vision, they repeatedly invoke what is in this case the irrelevant criterion of sensuous beauty.

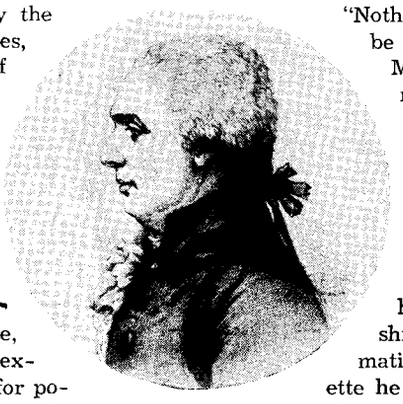
The book makes no new contributions to the interpretation of Cézanne's art, accepting as it does the traditional conception of his art as a reconstruction of the material world of mass and space in terms of color. The authors have after exhaustive study recorded and codified all the technical means by which Cézanne achieved his goal, and for this the Cézanne scholars must be thankful. It should be stated, however, that Dr. Barnes and Miss de Mazia have made no concessions to the general public, either in readability or arrangement.

One Revolution Was Enough

A DIARY OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION. By Gouverneur Morris. Edited by Beatrix Cary Davenport. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1939. $9.

Reviewed by CRANE BRINTON

THE diary of Gouverneur Morris has long been one of the mainstays of conservative historians of the French Revolution. Morris, a younger son belonging to the rich landed family of the manor of Morrisania in the Bronx, had taken the successful side during the American Revolution, and, going abroad on business in 1789, remained to succeed Jefferson as our Minister to France. Morris was a thorough Hamiltonian, and he had already had in America about as much revolution as he was built to stand. Long before the collapse of the monarchy in France he had noted in his meticulously kept diary the vanities, impracticalities, and impossible aims of the French radicals, and had predicted the essentials of the sequence Terror-Thermidor-Bonaparte at least as early and as clearly as had Burke. His short-term predictions in the early years were quite as accurate, and earned for him an extraordinary reputation for political sagacity among the aristocrats whose society he loved to frequent and, among the revolutionists themselves, a reputation for political meddling which rather lessened his effectiveness as a diplomatist.



Gouverneur Morris

Known in its main features ever since Jared Sparks used it in his life of Morris written over a century ago, the diary in its entirety has not hitherto been easily accessible. The present work, carefully edited so as to preserve just what Morris wrote—including a use of capital letters generous even for the eighteenth century—and equipped with good if allusive notes and introduction, goes through the year 1792, leaving a less important third volume for future publication. There is apparently little here to cause historians to make major revisions in their estimates either of Morris or of the French Revolution. But all students of the period will be glad that so important a source-book is now available.

Diary fans will find pretty good fare. Morris tells all, or almost all, about his love affairs. As an eighteenth-century gentleman, of course, he takes love with a grain of salt, and his lack of romantic or Freudian concern will annoy those who don't like the eighteenth century. He goes into satisfying details about his illnesses, mostly of the digestive tract, and about his food, which to this vitamin-ruled age of ours will no doubt seem an adequate explanation of his illnesses. Of his numerous and complicated business affairs he writes daily at great length, but somewhat cryptically, so that very little of his business seems to make sense. Perhaps, however, the notion that business ought to make sense is an intellectualist fallacy nourished by classical economics, and Morris may here be both a modern and a realist. At any rate, he seems to have been a good business man.

In his travels he notes details of crops, soils, posts, inns, and now and then remarks an elegant prospect. But he is not to be seduced by the new rage for Gothic. He posts through Amiens without even mentioning the cathedral. Forced to wait for horses at Rouen, he grudgingly strolls by the cathedral there, and notes, "Nothing to admire unless it be the Labor expended in Minutiousness and Ornamentality, so as to take away from Greatness the Appearance of Grandeur." Not as a rule notably successful in bringing to life the hundreds of persons he mentions, he is now and then shrewd enough in estimating character. Of Lafayette he writes, "in Fact he is the Lover of Freedom from Ambition, of which there are two kinds, the one of Pride, the other of Vanity, and his partakes most of the latter." Morris was no intellectual. Talking about the kindly and liberal Duke of La Rochefoucauld, who was puzzled by the failure of events to conform to the best books, he notes "That none know how to govern but those who have been used to it and such men have rarely either Time or Inclination to write about it. The Books, therefore, which are to be met with, contain mere Utopian ideas."

For readers not especially fond of the diary as a form of literature, the book cannot be very strongly recommended. Morris is no Pepys; and many readers will find his business engagements, teas, dinners, physics, and gallantries a bit wearying in the repetition. This diary, in spite of the great names that dot its pages, seems not to be the illuminating record of an insider, like the diary of Greville, recently published in its entirety; nor is the Morris here revealed as interesting and important a person as our greatest political diarist, John Quincy Adams. Morris was indeed very right about the course of the French Revolution. He was a sensible man, temperamentally a bit inclined to pessimism, and such men are usually right about revolutions.

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Our Relations with Mexico

MEXICO MARCHES. By J. H. Plenn. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1939. $3.

Reviewed by ERNEST GRUENING

MEXICO has during the last decade been increasingly of interest to Americans. Since the middle twenties a swelling literature has varyingly portrayed the great scenic beauty, the picturesque folkways, but above all the social reforms emanating from the revolution at our door. A great wave of tourists likewise began pouring across the Rio Grande, eager to please and be pleased. Ten years ago, too, a new era of friendliness between the two governments set in, replacing the previous decade and a half of intervention, strained relations, and misunderstanding. Three American Ambassadors, Dwight W. Morrow, J. Reuben Clark, and Josephus Daniels, came imbued with the high purpose of understanding Mexico's problems sympathetically and of tendering every assistance possible from a powerful, well-disposed neighbor. Six years ago the rapprochement was strengthened by President Roosevelt's proclamation of the good neighbor policy and its fulfillment in word and deed in our dealings with Mexico. Indeed, relations between the United States and Mexico bade fair to approach that ideal relationship between neighbors which exists between the United States and its only other land neighbor, Canada. Concomitantly, too, Mexico began to prosper. Her social and economic reform program was raising the levels of existence and infusing new hope in the hearts of millions of disinherited, dispossessed proletarians and peasants.

Yet almost overnight—within a short twelvemonth — relations have become sharply strained. Mexico's economy likewise has suffered. Profound differences between the governments of the two countries have arisen, manifest even through the measured words of official notes, evidenced visibly through the confiscation of American properties in land and oil and an obvious policy designed to squeeze out all foreign holdings with compensation therefor more than dubious. The tourist business has dwindled sharply. The press of the two nations has become critical.

The issues underlying this tragic change are profoundly controversial. There is the view that the Mexican Government's course is folly, is an ill-conceived and half-baked "leftism" destructive of its generation-old gains in the emancipation of its people, and that it needlessly sacrificed Mexico's greatest asset, the good will and coöperation of a generous neighbor. And there is the view that Cardenas's course is correct, wise, justifiable.

Mr. Plenn vigorously espouses the latter position. He presents the psychology, the mental conditioning of that sector of Mexican public opinion which believes in the Cardenas policy. One feels that Mr. Plenn sincerely subscribes to the cause he pleads. Moreover, he exhibits complete familiarity with the scene and its dramatis personæ. His style is a slangy and salty journalese, which effectively transmits his interpretations.

In a vigorous believer, overstatement is perhaps to be expected. To place Uncle Sam in the potential role of "The Mickey (Himself) Maguire of Latin America . . . The tough baby of the Western Hemisphere," after March 1938, when the Cardenas sweeping oil expropriations evoked not a single official deed or word from the United States that could remotely resemble the acts and attitude of the comic cartoon tough kid, suggests a confusion as to who hit whom and did it first. The attitude of the Roosevelt Administration—in contrast with that of the Wilson, Harding, and Coolidge administrations (before Morrow)—is a model of restraint. Is a great nation to be denied even the right of presenting its point of view in defense of what appear to its officials to be unwarranted infringements of its citizens' rights? Certainly a torrent of newspaper criticism has been loosed upon the Administration at home for alleged supineness in its Mexican policy.

In contrast with his adversely critical attitude toward the United States, Mr. Plenn pictures Mexico not merely as "one vast laboratory of democracy" but even more as a nation which may become "a more complete democracy than others past or present." It is difficult to reconcile such superlativeness with the recent expulsion of the experienced *New York Times* correspondent, Mr. Frank Kluckhohn, whose sin in the eyes of the Mexican censorship seems to have been his reporting the growth of Nazi and Fascist influence in Mexico. Yet on this subject Mr. Plenn himself remarks that "the Nazi campaign becomes more open every day, grows by leaps and bounds, has reached proportions comparable to the pre-war period when German influence was strong enough to make Carranza consider an alliance with the Kaiser," and he describes "the extraordinary tolerance of the Nazi religion and Hitler idolatry" in the schools —a paradox, he points out, in a school system from which the traditional metaphysics, that is to say, any religious instruction, is sternly excluded. That Mexican school children are permitted to "heil" the Führer's "swastika-draped photograph" is certainly a paradox in the development of the-best-democracy-ever.

Mr. Plenn would be more convincing if he had, instead, admitted the almost complete lack of democratic practice and procedure in Mexico's experience, had stressed the extent of the Revolution's efforts to broaden the base of participation in the economic life of the nation, and did not assume that our United States political philosophy, however much we cherish it and desire to see it extended, is necessarily the road to salvation for another people which has been denied evolutionary self-direction in its past and confronts the complex problems of today with a totally different political and cultural inheritance.

Ernest Gruening, head of the Division of Territories and Island Possessions of the Department of the Interior, is the author of "Mexico and Its Heritage."

"The Nazi campaign becomes more open every day" . . . National Socialism, Mexican Brand, by Diego Rivera (from "Portrait of Mexico" by Diego Rivera and Bertram D. Wolfe).

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A Nation in Action

AMERICA AT WAR. By Frederic L. Paxson. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1939. $3.75.

Reviewed by RAYMOND J. SONTAG

HERE is a book which should be read for pleasure and enlightenment by every American interested in the past or the future of his country. Pride of country breathes through every page, pride in a people who, drawn unwillingly into a European war, ignorant of the costs and the nature of war, mobilized the forces needed to decide the outcome of the war. The story begins in April, 1917, and ends in November, 1918; it is, therefore, unclouded by the dubious antecedents and the more dubious results of the war. It is a story of action, action slow and fumbling at first, then gathering strength and coherence, until the enemy was overwhelmed and disarmed. Without the American effort, imperfect though it was in many respects, the Allies could certainly not have won so soon, and almost certainly would have suffered defeat. This, Professor Paxson repeatedly and rightly emphasizes. Whatever other American war aims may have been lost at the peace conference, the central war aim—to prevent a German victory—was attained. So much for the story of the past, a great story told as it should be told.

Except in his preface, the author is content to tell what happened, leaving to the reader the task of applying the lessons of the past to the present. It is not a hard task. If war comes again, it is unlikely that we shall be able safely to live in a "patriotic madhouse" for six months before getting down to business. "The war was in its forty-seventh day before an army was authorized; and in its one hundred and fifty-seventh day before the drafted men were due in camp." Committee members fought with a ferocity which might better have been expended upon the Germans, before the realization dawned that democracies must adopt the leadership principle in war. Finance and supplies, the assistance indispensable at the outset, could be given to the Allies at once. Throughout, Wilson's idealism "was vital enough to give purpose to fagged majorities among the Allies, and to lessen among enemy peoples the willingness to prolong the war." Soldiers, however, were ready only at the end of a year. Shipping and aircraft were still to come when the firing ceased. This is a record worth pondering.

The costs are also worth pondering. Not only the cost in effort, money, and men. The damage to the fabric of American institutions was more grievous and more lasting. Possibly the expenditure was worth making. Possibly it will be worth making again. But it will be well to make up our minds in advance.

Commercial Photography
Horace Kramer

Miracle of Survival

MARGINAL LAND. By Horace Kramer. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company. 1939. $2.50.

Reviewed by JAMES GRAY

THE theme of a man's struggle against fate can never fail to be interesting and vital. It is particularly appealing when the protagonist is frail, sensitive, and altogether very inadequately equipped for the encounter which is unequal at best. The triumph of such a figure is warming and reassuring in a way to which one may respond without apology. For this story touches the miracle of man's improbable survival in a difficult world.

Horace Kramer makes his debut as a novelist with such a story. He sends young Stephen Randall to the marginal lands of South Dakota burdened with nearly every conceivable disadvantage. He has been forced to leave Chicago because he is threatened with a serious physical collapse. He knows nothing of the land and lacks the background for dealing with the problems of husbandry in a place where nature seems particularly capricious. He is burdened with a beautiful, city-bred wife whose half-hearted efforts at adjustment result only in a continuous tragicomedy of failure, tension, and resentment.

Yet in the midst of this atmosphere of enduring crisis, Randall has a more than creditable success. Gradually he gains health, self-esteem, the regard of neighbors, and the knowledge of how to make the land give up its rewards. It is, of course, a zig-zag, often disheartening progress. Randall fights once more the old South Dakota battle of wheat, tempted by the fine soil and ruined by the hot winds, the lack of rain. He must, before he can really find peace, escape from his cruelly demanding first wife and take for his second a neighbor girl, born to hardship. But he makes his way through a tangled pattern of economic, physical, and emotional trials and brings himself out whole.

In dealing with his central characters, Mr. Kramer betrays sometimes the novice's fascination with the art of analysis. Randall explores his sensibilities in many long passages that tend to impede his progress as a man of action. With the secondary figures, the author seems more completely at home. Best of all them is Mr. Voorhees, a "squaw man," whom Mr. Kramer has managed with casual plausibility to make the embodiment of the wisdom and the good-will of the race.

Mr. Kramer writes with fluency. His pages are illuminated with insight and also with a moving regard for human dignity. He indulges in none of those low-moaning incantations which recur with such dismal regularity in regional novels of this type whenever the crop is about to fail or the protagonist is girding up his loins for battle. One wishes that Mr. Kramer could be persuaded to give up the use of miracle-working adverbs like "instinctively," and occasional coinages like "definitize."

But these are minor flaws in a very real new talent, one which is sober, honest, and dedicated to an understanding treatment of sound human values.

Promised Land

SONG OF THE VALLEY. By Sholem Asch. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1939. $2.

Reviewed by N. L. ROTHMAN

FOR the scene of his new book Sholem Asch turns at last to his people's oldest and newest home. Palestine has been a lament for centuries; today it is news, in a strong tonic key of struggle and hope. Asch's story is of a group of Jewish colonists who set forth to subdue and make habitable one of the Holy Land's most formidable spots. It is a piece of flat, swampy wasteland at the foot of Mount Gilboa, said to have been cursed by King David with barrenness. Nothing grows upon this parched, sun-beaten slope, and the valley below is one large bog infested with insects and wild life. It seems to possess a malignant personality of its own, bent upon swallowing life and resisting civilization. As though in acceptance of this challenge, the colonists give it a name, Emek, and set themselves to the heart-breaking task of making a garden of a desert. The battle is elementary. Men labor and sicken, a torrent wipes out a month of patient grubbing in the soil, there are the Bedouins to be handled—not enemies here but suspicious and temperamental cousins—and there are all the fatalities and set-backs that man meets with when he essays to push back a frontier. Remembering all the differences of race and scene, the story still has in it every ele-

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ment of spirit and endurance that characterize those tales we know so well of American pioneering.

Which brings us to a consideration of one of the book's most interesting phases. To the reader who has learned of Jews from literature, these Jews clearing the Emek will seem strange and different. For the novels of past centuries have treated solely, and naturally so, of the Jew dispossessed of his land, of history's orphan, the nervous and fearful wanderer. He has been a familiar character indeed, intellectually introvert, psychically and psychologically marred, quick-talking and -moving, uneasy, complex. He has been so in books by Asch himself, and by most others from Eugene Sue to Ben Hecht. But not so here. What is the difference? To find a parallel for these calm, strong-minded, full-spirited Jewish pioneers we will have to go back to the chronicles of the Bible, telling of the first days, when Jews tilled their own land and were a whole people. The pages of "Song of the Valley" ring with shouts of that old joy, as they dredge the swamp and hew the wood, and with the pounding of feet as they dance with linked arms and sing of Israel, not the lament but the pæan. The parable is clear and needs no further elaboration. It may be that Palestine is yet to be the seat of a further despair; but such a book as this one of Asch's tells us eloquently why it has been a dream so patiently clung to, and how it may be in fact the simplest healing for an old sickness. I do not think it can be doubted that "Song of the Valley" will stand very high among Asch's works, a pure, lyric song as perfect in its way as the symphonic "Three Cities."

Magazines under Goebbels

(*Continued from page 4*)

of a month, translations of five English works are mentioned, three volumes from various Scandinavian tongues, one from Hungarian, as against a single work from French—one of Vercel's—and none at all from Spanish or Italian.

At this point an anomaly appears. One would expect to find literary criticism in pretty bad shape, weak and spineless after being deprived of many of the touchstones which are commonly applied to works of the intellect, and violently divorced from a considerable portion of the world's cultural heritage. The actual result has been to sharpen the edge of criticism, for the moment at least. Deprived of all other weapons, the German critics have been using those of pure esthetics with a freedom and vigor quite foreign to any preconception.

"No, this will never do," says a typical review roundly of a new novel by an author high in the approval of the great propaganda ministry—a book which might be really valuable to that ministry. "Certainly there ought to be a fine book on the naval side of the war. Just as surely this is not it. The book is disorderly, rhapsodic, and not even well informed." Now these are pretty hard words to use about one of the pet poodles of the regime in power, but apparently the censorship passed them through all right, and there has been no word of any comeback, since the criticism was made on purely esthetic grounds.

The same quickened and in a sense purified esthetic interest is observable in the art magazines. Never have they been so numerous, so popular; never has even Germany, the land of good reproduction, filled them with better prints, or better art criticism. Such art magazines as *Deutsche Kunst*, the *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Vereine für Kunstwissenschaft*, and the quarterly (in spite of its name) *Münchner Jahrbuch der Bildenden Kunst* would be a credit to any country; they have all been founded since the coming of the Hitler regime. The same period has marked the extension from the quarterly into the monthly field of *Kunst-Rundschau* and increases in number of pages and in the excellence and number of color prints in the older art magazines such as *Form und Farbe*, *Belvedere*, and *Graphische Kunst*, not to mention the great development of *Gebrauchsgraphik* into a magazine of advertising art with international status. It is quite possible that in the case of the graphic arts this flareup in the periodicals reflects a genuine and permanent movement. There seems little reason why it should not, since the graphic arts, essentially non-political, do not have to bear the same burdens as writing. On the literary side, however, the matter is a little more dubious in spite of the present general excellences.

German periodical literature has a good deal to say on the esthetic side at the present moment, but we have always been told that a literature which is not free to express the individual's reaction to his economic and political surroundings, as well as that to other individuals, inevitably runs out into preciosity. Certainly the disease appears already to have attacked the technical press. Those fine monthly reviews from Vienna which had so much to contribute in the fields of biology, psychology, anthropology, and medicine, have either disappeared, or appear indeed, but filled with reprints from foreign periodicals or absurdly explosive denunciations of inferior races. Or they carry hair-raising articles like that in *Archiv der Gesellschaft für Rassenbiologie*, justifying the bombing of civilians on medical grounds, since it bears most hardly on the weaklings who least deserve to survive. Perhaps the answer is that art makes a willing prostitute, while science can be bought to no service but that of truth.

Fletcher Pratt is the author of "Hail, Cæsar" and "Ordeal by Fire," and co-author of "The Lost Battalion." His latest book is "Secret and Urgent," a study of codes and ciphers.

Musical Life in America

AN AMERICAN MUSICIAN'S STORY. By Olga Samaroff Stokowski. New York: W. W. Norton and Company. 1939. $3.

Reviewed by IRVING KOLODIN

AS the previously published volumes by Geraldine Farrar, David Mannes, and Daniel Gregory Mason testify, this is an open season for reminiscences by American musicians. The right of this author to inclusion in such a circle is secure on both counts, for she was a Samaroff before she was a Stokowski and a Hickenlooper before she was either, an admired pianist before she became a pedagogue. Not the least entertaining section in the book is that which describes the transition from Hickenlooper (first name not specified) to Samaroff, at the insistence of the manager, Henry Wolfsohn, before her debut concert in New York, thirty-five years ago.

Those who might regard this as a source-book on the volatile and unpredictable conductor whose name Mme. Stokowski still bears (though a divorce and another Mrs. Stokowski have intervened) will not be gratified, for their relationship is recounted almost casually. Mme. Stokowski is concerned with other and more important business. Her book has a theme—the change that has come upon American musical life since her early days as a student in Texas. More particularly, the improvement in educational opportunities which no longer makes imperative the "finishing" in Europe which was customary in her day.

A good deal of this is signified, in her statement of the case, by the emergence of such institutions as the Juilliard Foundation and the Curtis Institute. However, when Mme. Stokowski cites the first piano faculty of the Juilliard—Ernest Hutcheson, Alexander Siloti, Josef and Rosina Lhevinne, Carl Friedberg, and James Friskin—she does not point out that she is the only American in this group, and that the students have merely lost a boatride, for each member of the group, in another day, would have been found in Berlin, Baden-Baden, St. Petersburg, or London.

Since Mme. Stokowski has been, at various times in her career, student, concert pianist, music critic, pedagogue, and music educator, the experiences she has to recount are no less varied than they are numerous. However, there is a curious mingling of sophistication and naïvete in her reactions, as when she says (apropos of advertising on the radio): "Many of those who criticize or ridicule the custom would soon forget their objections if they could earn the fees that are paid to performers in the American commercial hours on the radio"—as if that reduced the validity of such objections! The writing is sufficient to the purpose, though no great inducement to the reader.

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A Diary of the French Revolution

By GOUVERNEUR MORRIS

AVAILABLE for the first time—the unexpurgated diaries of the American Minister to France during the French Revolution.

"HAVING spent all day yesterday and all night last night until dawn this morning in complete absorption in 'A Diary of the French Revolution' by Gouverneur Morris, I am convinced that this book is of the most sensational importance — its publication an event equal in literary and historical annals to the first publication of the Memoirs of Saint-Simon, Pepys' Diary, The Private Papers of James Boswell, the Memoirs of William Hickey, and the Memoirs of Casanova. In fact, it combines some of the best features of all five, plus an ease and felicity of expression and a subtlety of wit that none of the others, except Saint-Simon, possessed. Of utmost value (too) are the brilliant, wittily-phrased and concisely informative footnotes by the editor, Beatrix Cary Davenport. From this you probably gather that I like the book. You are right."— Burton Rascoe.

Illustrated, 2 vols, $9.00

Night Rider

By ROBERT PENN WARREN

"THE burning of the tobacco warehouses is unsurpassed in its kind by any other American novelist; one would have to go to Tolstoy to find its equal."— *Allen Tate.* "The excitement of the book is intense, from beginning to end, in emotional conflict and in physical happenings. No one who picks it up will put it down unfinished."— *Harper's Magazine. A Literary Fellowship novel.* $2.50

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By FREDERIC L. PAXSON

THIS second volume of "American Democracy and the World War" follows "Pre-War Years" and analyzes our successes and failures in mobilizing manpower and industry for the last war — a particularly timely subject today when America is embarking on a vast program for preparedness. $3.75

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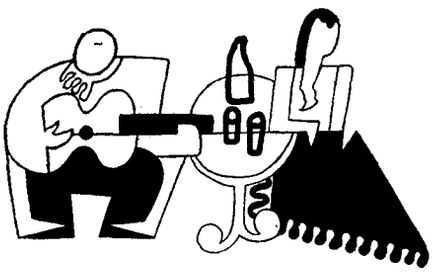

Caray!

What a find!

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"It gains more than it suffers from comparison with Steinbeck's *Tortilla Flat.*" —*Time*

"Fresh and lovely . . . with something of the rarefied sunlight of Nathan's *One More Spring.*" —*Gannett*

"A novel with a new theme, opening new windows on New York life."—*Hansen*

"Explores a totally new territory . . . a poignant little saga of sympathy and skill." —*News-Week*

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"Catches the color, flavor, intensity of this city within a city . . . deeply poignant, beautifully told."—*Times*

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And published by Morrow.

NOT A BAD IDEA—

We have been impressed of late by the number of new subscribers who tell us they first heard of *The Saturday Review* through an enthusiastic friend. Not a bad idea. Why not show your friends a copy of the SRL and see if anything happens?

Binyon's Dante

DANTE'S PURGATORIO. With a Translation by Laurence Binyon. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by LEONARD BACON

IT has been pointed out before that Mr. Binyon is a scholar, a gentleman, and a poet in the highest and best sense of all three of those much misused words. For various reasons which will easily occur to the most casual reader, the "Purgatorio" presents many problems to the translator which he hardly encounters at all in the "Inferno." It is hard enough to render the close-wrought logic of St. Thomas in prose. It is the very devil to do it in acceptable verse. And one might say it was wholly impossible to achieve poetry in the connection, if Mr. Binyon's performance were not there to give such a statement the lie. No verse translation is closer to the meaning, the spirit, and the form of its great original than this version. The reviewer knows what this compliment means and utters it with complete conviction.

The book is really noble. Again and again Mr. Binyon reaches magnificent English verse, poetry in its own right, and for long and beautifully sustained passages. The dignity and splendor of what is certainly a difficult poem stand out. You cannot miss them. Love's labor has not been lost. It is fun to praise such a book.

It is not such fun to carp, but some little must be ventured in that way. I am very much mistaken if in the whole "Divine Comedy" there is one such scrofulous rhyme as Mr. Binyon permits himself to perpetrate on every other page. I know there is not in all Dante one line of the limping scazon breed, such as Mr. Binyon, following the error of the moderns who see a grace in the blunder of Donne, has introduced again and again. Ben Jonson, it will be remembered, said that "Donne for not keeping of accent, deserved hanging." And Mr. Binyon, apparently seduced by Mr. Pound, has gone the limit to deserve it.

A succession of tercets like the following would make Dante fall as he fell after the vision of the lovers of Rimini.

> The planet that promoteth love was there,
> Making all the East to laugh and be joyful,
> And veiled the Fishes that escorted her.
> I turned to the right and contemplated all
> The other pole; and four stars o'er me came,
> Never yet seen save by the first people.

One must have a subtle ear to be satisfied when the final syllables of "people" and "joyful" are expected to chime with each other and with "all." Mr. Binyon ought not to do it. My curse on Mr. Pound and the inventions he has found out.

This is Mr. Binyon at his theoretic worst, and it is unfortunate that the passage is on his first page. The places where he has covered himself with glory outweigh all his concessions to the spirit of perversification. Anyone who rises to the height required in Canto XXX when Beatrice drops her veil, may be permitted a few idiosyncrasies. The rendering of the whole speech from "Guardaci ben! Ben son, ben son Beatrice," and the divine simile of the snows in the Apennines which follows it, seem to me the summit of what translation can do. All caviling aside, this version of the "Purgatorio" is the work of a poet not unworthy to know greatness.

A Century on the North Atlantic

RIVALRY ON THE ATLANTIC, 1839-1939. *By Commander W. Mack Angas (CEC) U. S. N. New York: Lee Furman.* 1939. $3.50.

Reviewed by ROBERT G. ALBION

THIS book is essentially a story of the perfection of the marine engine on the North Atlantic shuttle, and therein lies its unique contribution. If it were simply another story of the development of the Atlantic liner, there would be no real need for it. Maginnis and Fry both wrote good accounts forty-odd years ago; Lee, Bowen, and Babcock brought the story up to date with readable volumes early in this decade. Machinery was the one thing that made the steamships distinctive: the other essential features of the transatlantic run, such as line organization, fixed sailing dates, and competition for the first class passenger trade with speed, size, and luxury, had all been introduced by the New York sailing packets before the *Sirius* and *Great Western* made their famous crossings in 1838.

Commander Angas, who belongs to the Civil Engineering Corps of the Navy, knows his marine engines well. Between his simple, clear-cut descriptions and his illustrations, even the unmechanical layman gets a pretty clear idea of how things worked, all the way from the side-lever engines of the early wooden paddle-wheelers to the powerful turbines of the *Queen Mary* and the *Normandie.* The treatment of the story is not uniform. The earlier portion follows the familiar, conventional accounts fairly closely, and better ship pictures could have been found for illustrations. With the giant *Great Eastern,* a half century ahead of her time in size, the author hits his stride, devoting more than a fifth of his book to the huge ship which was a marvel in engineering even though a complete failure financially. The wrecks of the Collins *Arctic* and the White Star *Atlantic* are described in detail. The book definitely improves in quality in the later period; the engravings, too, are better than those in the earlier part.

Three features open to criticism may not be primarily the fault of the author. Only in their more generous moods will publishers consent to much of a bibliography; here there is none at all. More unpardonable is the absence of an index. The period of "1839-1939" in the title seems an unfortunate effort to bring the book up to the minute; the year 1838 marked the clean-cut beginning of the story, whereas the following year had no particular significance.

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The "Right Reasons" for Writing Poetry

THE COLLECTED POEMS OF LAURA RIDING. New York: Random House. 1938. $4.

Reviewed by DUDLEY FITTS

LET us ponder ultimate truth. Miss Riding is with us. Hauteur is a potent persuasive; but it must be confessed that Miss Riding has few equals, when it comes to browbeating an audience into conviction by sheer force of arrogance, among any poets living or dead. The preface to her Collected Poems is a case in point. Stripped of its assured Ciceronian damn-your-eyes manner, it purports to be a statement of poetic belief. With the best will in the world, I cannot see that it achieves this purpose. There is much haughty leading up to the "right reasons" for writing poetry and for reading it: "At last," the reader exults, "we're going to get it!": but these right reasons never get stated. Somehow they seem to have got lost in the prose. Excellent things have been said ("The frequent vulgarism 'What is this poem *about?*'"); portentous things have been said ("It is less difficult to read or exist well than to read or exist ill"); but the expected revelation fails to materialize. One gathers that there are right reasons for writing poetry and that Miss Riding writes for these reasons; that there are wrong reasons for writing poetry and that Miss Riding never writes for these reasons—or, if she has done so innocently (her word) in the past, she has suppressed the resulting poems. *Spectatum admissi risum teneatis, amici?* Or, in effect, "Could you keep from giggling at such a display as this, friends?"

Horace's question is not entirely inept. True, he was discussing physical incongruity, and that in painting; but unnecessary pother is a kind of incongruity, too, and it becomes doubly laughable here, attendant upon the arid abstractions that compose the greater part of Miss Riding's book. The compulsion to write purely abstract verse is its own right reason for writing; perhaps (one can only conjecture) it is Miss Riding's right reason. But it seems easily possible that she is wrong if she believes that the reader's acceptance of this right reason will abolish the obscurity of her poems. True, not all the poems present blank surfaces: a good example is "Regret of War Ways," which is fine verse. But it is noteworthy that in poems of this type the impulse to make sheer abstractions is not allowed full play: a thing, to put it crudely, is being expressed, not simply being said. Of the run-of-the-mill pieces—the iterations of negative particles, unresolved temporal clauses, multiplication-table recitations of concrete detail:

What to say when the
Who cannot
When the spider what
Does what does dies
Death spider death
Who cannot
Death cease death

(never mind the context: it won't help you)—one can only say Alas, and wonder if one of the right reasons for writing poetry may not be verbal neurosis.

To a limited, a very limited, extent this book is valuable. There are perhaps a dozen poems (I list "Helen's Faces," "The Wind, the Clock, the We," "Concerning Food," "Because I Sit Here So," "Seizure of the World," "Regret of War Ways") that repay detailed investigation. But from the greater part I am excluded.

Dudley Fitts, on the staff of the Choate School, is the author of "Poems: 1929-36," *the translator of "One Hundred Poems from the Palatine Authology," and co-translator of the "Alcestis" of Euripides and the "Antigone" of Sophocles.*

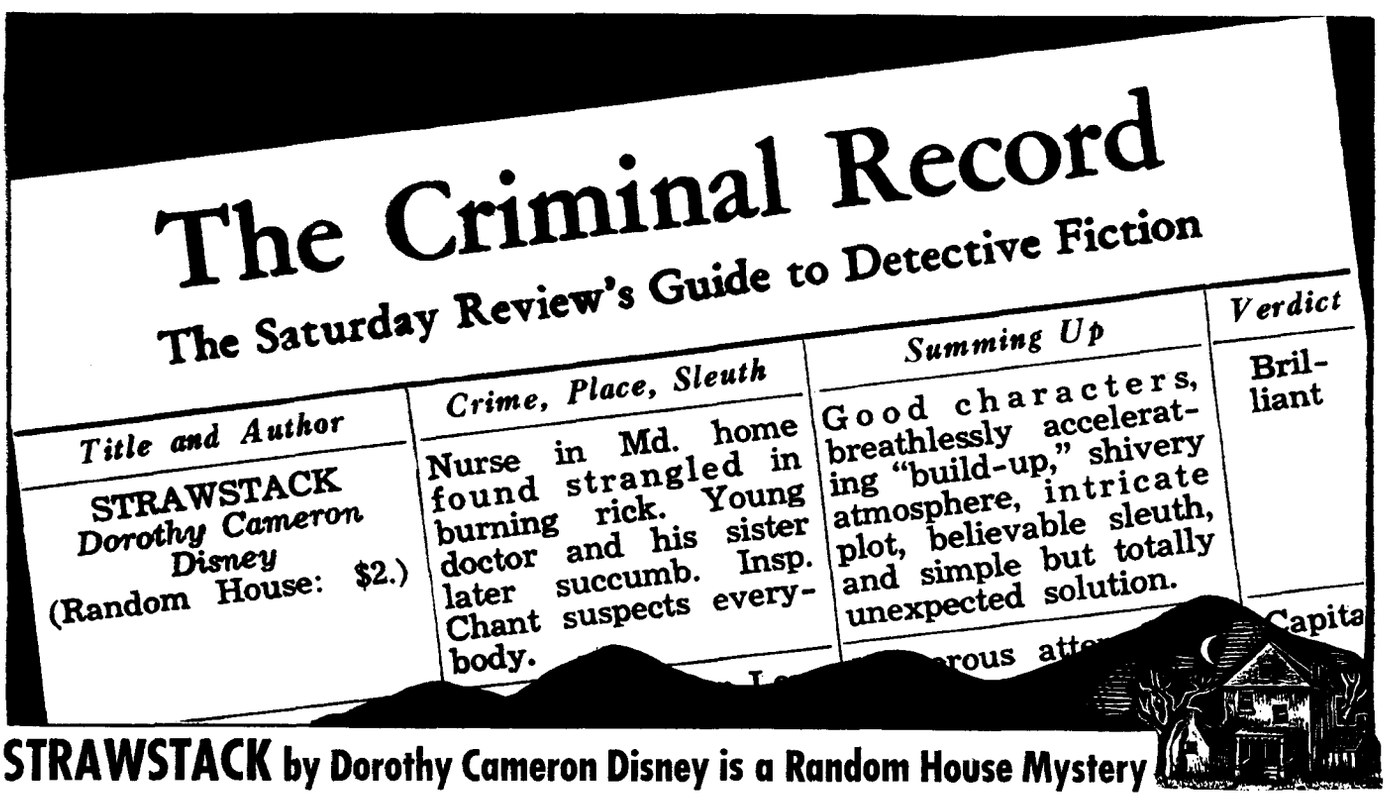
A Novel of Saratoga

GUNS OF BURGOYNE. By Bruce Lancaster. New York: Frederick A. Stokes. 1939. $2.50.

THERE will always be room for a historical novel by a man acute enough to realize that the best way of telling the story of a great victory is through the lips of someone who partook of the accompanying defeat. In this case the battle is Saratoga. In the center of the picture is Captain Kurt Ahrens, late of His Saxon Majesty's artillery service, profoundly bored with garrison life at a minor German court, wishful of active war. The book tells how he got more than he bargained for, and a sweetheart in addition.

The great historical characters—"Gentleman Johnny" Burgoyne, with his mistress, his good taste in phrases, the idol of his troops; Baron Riedesel and the Baroness, whom Anita Loos would recognize; old St. Luc, the French nobleman who became a savage; Benedict Arnold at the peak of his character and glory—these start from the pages into life. So do the details of the campaign of which history is most neglectful—the daily life of the soldier, the picture of the country, what there was to eat, and whether it rained. Nor could there be much improvement on the reported details of conversation, at headquarters and in the ranks.

The thread that carries these jewels is rather weaker. Kurt Ahrens is obvious and uncomplicated, makes acute observations on military matters like a hero out of G. A. Henty, and falls in love with a girl from the opposite side like a hero out of Mary Johnston. In short, the story is a formula story; but most readers will be able to overlook this while enjoying the book for its vivid pictorial quality.


The Criminal Record
The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction
Title and Author
Crime, Place, Sleuth
Summing Up
Verdict
STRAWSTACK
Dorothy Cameron Disney
(Random House: $2.)
Nurse in Md. home found strangled in burning rick. Young doctor and his sister later succumb. Insp. Chant suspects everybody.
Good characters, breathlessly accelerating "build-up," shivery atmosphere, intricate plot, believable sleuth, and simple but totally unexpected solution.
Brilliant
STRAWSTACK by Dorothy Cameron Disney is a Random House Mystery

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A Federal System for the Democracies

UNION NOW. By Clarence K. Streit. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1939. $3.

Reviewed by JAMES FREDERICK GREEN

IT is one of the curious paradoxes of contemporary history that the United States has contributed more to the theory and less to the practice of international government than any other great power. From their tradition of constitutionalism, given classic expression in "The Federalist," and from their tragic dilemma over states' rights, Americans understand clearly what is implied in "a more perfect union." From their enjoyment of geographic isolation and fear of foreign entanglements, however, they act independently and assert their national sovereignty as vigorously as any self-determined people. No more logical, forceful, or unreal exposition of the whole concept of international government could be desired, therefore, than this book by a Middlewestern journalist—the former Geneva correspondent of *The New York Times.*

Mr. Streit believes fervently and writes cogently about the imperative need for *union now* of the peace-loving democracies. The United States, Great Britain and the Dominions, France, Switzerland, Belgium, Holland, Finland, and the Scandinavian countries—fifteen overwhelmingly powerful nations—should unite in a federal system with a common constitution, central government, citizenship, army and navy, currency, tariff, and other community institutions. Only through such a union, Mr. Streit argues, can we save our civilization from the suicidal effects of State sovereignty and tariffs, and from the murderous intentions of the dictators.

Although the validity of Mr. Streit's argument can hardly be gainsaid and although his explanation for the failure of the League of Nations is completely sound, the impracticality of his remedy is unhappily obvious. In an age that is dominated, perhaps to a fatal degree, by nationalism, there is insufficient basis for union among any fifteen different countries. All these nations are so unlike in many essentials, even in their theory and practice of "democracy" itself, that only the catastrophe of another world war—the very contingency which Mr. Streit seeks to avert—could compel a federal union. Economic and class divisions, for example, are sufficiently great in most of these fifteen countries to weaken the national unity and strength, but not to provide any permanent basis for a new community. Both empires and Communist Internationals are conceivably the basis for a union of many countries, but nationalist and capitalist democracies contain too many contradictory and changing elements to permit such amalgamation. One recognizes the sincerity of Mr. Streit's argument and the skillfulness of his presentation, but doubts the possibility of immediate fulfillment. Union now is perhaps the sanest of many alternatives, but certainly the least likely to be chosen.

James F. Green is on the staff of the Foreign Policy Association.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 260)

T. H. WHITE:
THE SWORD IN THE STONE

Ceratosaurus was savage and aggressive, Atlantosaurus timid and old . . . but it was the defender who triumphed. . . . Carcasses cannot continue their species, and in the end the Kangaroos had consumed the very flesh on which they lived.

Seaman Who Survived

CAPTAIN MARRYAT. By Christopher Lloyd. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1939. $4.

Reviewed by STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT

THE dust-wrapper of Mr. Lloyd's biography says merely "Captain Marryat" but the actual binding-case of the book lengthens out the title to "Captain Marryat and the Old Navy." And, on the whole, the binding-case is right. Mr. Lloyd has chosen to concentrate on Marryat the seaman rather than on Marryat the novelist of the sea. And, as Marryat's own sea-career was as full and adventurous as any of his heroes', the result makes for excellent reading, if not for completely-rounded biography.

Marryat began his life afloat as a fourteen-year-old midshipman, under Cochrane, in the *Imperious.* He ended it as a captain, in command of the *Ariadne,* having served through the Burmese War. In between, he had been twice wounded, more than a hundred times personally engaged with the enemy, fought Americans, French, Burmese, suppressed smugglers, drawn up the first effective code of flag-signals for merchant ships, and sketched the dead face of Napoleon, lying in state at St. Helena. Vain, boisterous, courageous, and irascible, he was part of the Old Navy during one of its most stirring periods. And the knowledge gained in the Service made books that readers still delight in, ninety years after his death.

Mr. Lloyd, in some respects, has performed his task admirably. He gives us a clear picture of the ships and the breed of men who went to make up that Old Navy, from the best of them to the worst. Britain was muddling through, in those days, as she has in all her wars. Your commander might be a Collingwood or a Cochrane—he might also be a Captain Bligh or an incompetent, drawling Lord George Stuart. The able seaman's life was a bitter hard one—the midshipman's scarcely better. Marryat was one of the tough, and survived—to do extraordinary service, feel himself badly treated, and grumble at getting no more than a C. B. There were hundreds like him in the Navy—and grumbling, they broke Napoleon.

Mr. Lloyd has written an interesting and realistic account of a dramatic period in English Naval History. But the Old Navy comes first—as it did, indeed, to Marryat, while he served in it.

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The New Books

Biography

SPANISH PRISONER. By Peter Elstob. Carrick & Evans. 1939. $2.50.

E. E. Cummings's "The Enormous Room" taught its readers that it is a nasty and degrading experience to be unjustly imprisoned in a country at war. Most people are aware of this, but for those who are not we recommend "Spanish Prisoner." The book—since it is the story of imprisonment under the Loyalists—will of course be seized on by supporters of Franco. This consideration might have restrained Mr. Elstob, if he had been an intelligent supporter of the Republic, from writing his book. It did not. Nevertheless, he is not a fascist trying to blacken the Republic by any means he can. He has told what appears to be a fairly accurate story, and if he has given anyone the impression that he was unjustly or inhumanly treated, they should understand that war is really hell in Catalonia as it was at Valley Forge.

His story is emotional and moving. Executions, even as just as those of fascists who rebelled against the democratic government, are shocking, and they took place several times a week in the prison Mr. Elstob describes. If the book falls far short of "The Enormous Room" in descriptive power and style, yet it has recorded vivid experiences in a simple, direct way. The author enlisted as an aviator for the Republic simply for excitement and adventure. It is no wonder, though one must be sorry for him, that he got in touch with the wrong sort of people—probably one of the irresponsible Anarchist or Trotskyite groups that did so much damage at the beginning of the war. After his arrival he spent his time sitting in cafés in the town—though he had been ordered to keep out of town—wearing a British air force cap with three crowns on it, which the Spaniards of course took to be Royalist insignia. To make matters worse, he drew maps of the fort and wrote part of a short story mentioning General Franco, in English. The moral of this book is that it's very dangerous to be naive in wartime.

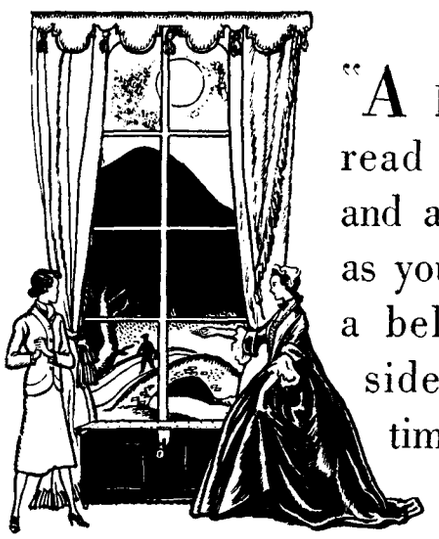
J. B.

THE GREEN FOOL. By Patrick Kavanagh. Harpers. 1939. $3.

Mr. Kavanagh's autobiography is difficult to describe in terms which will convey anything but an impression of uncritical enthusiasm to another mind. The materials are the simplest and most obvious—the childhood, adolescence, young manhood of a boy who was a bit of a queer fish in a country district till he grew up into a poet; and that childhood taking place in peasant Ireland, the most written-about spot in the world. Explaining what qualities set such a work apart from the many others of its kind is about like performing a similar office for A. E. Housman's poems.

Fundamentally, the excellences of the present work are not altogether dissimilar from those of Housman. Kavanagh has the same sure ear for the melodies of the language, his prose rings the same delicate changes on familiar rhythms as the English professor's verse. He has the same approach to life, as an amazing and sometimes appalling peep-show whose effect would be ruined by contemplating it through the spectacles of any particular philosophy or ethic. Yet the differences are more remarkable than the similarities. Kavanagh is young enough to be anesthetic to death, gayer than the Shropshire lad ever thought of being, and has a powerful Hibernian sneer that instantly eviscerates anything in its direction.

Those who are expecting a new version of George Moore's confessions should, however, be warned. This is not a volume of literary autobiography, with a pet python in the bedroom and a lot of people talking art in the parlor. In fact, there is not an involved sentence or a literary reference in the book. Its author lays no claim to being a literary figure of any kind, even a minor one. He writes his book through the eyes of an Irish peasant who in some bewildering and incomprehensible manner has received a gift for combining words; is more interested in potatoes than in prosody; and ends with the story



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of how, having made the pilgrimage to London which seems required of every Irish writer, he found there nothing but reasons why he should return to the land from which he has harvested one of the best books of its kind.

F. P.

THE JOURNALS OF KIERKEGAARD. A. Selection Edited and Translated by Alexander Dru. Oxford University Press. $7.

The growing interest in Søren Kierkegaard in England and America has resulted in the beginning of translation of his works into English. A usable volume of the "Journals" is therefore a necessity. For it is impossible to understand writings which illumine the subjective life of the human spirit without an acquaintance with their author's life of inward experience. Kierkegaard was an unhappy man, tortured by melancholy and by that "thorn in the flesh" which he regarded as "the high price at which Almighty God sold me an intellectual power which has found no equal among its contemporaries."

The "Journals" are not a diary; but they are an autobiography. They contain Kierkegaard's own analyses of the few incidents which determined the current of his life and thought; they reveal his progress from early doubts concerning traditional religion to the final certainty which motivated his attack on official Christianity; and they contain much else, which makes them excellent reading—reflections upon himself and his contemporaries, on Goethe and Luther, on the faults of the Hegelians, on woman, on communists and divorce and income tax. Mr. Dru's selection is discriminating and his translation admirable.

C. B.

Fiction

SUPERCARGO. By Earl Whitehorne. Funk & Wagnalls. 1939. $2.50.

The father of the man who wrote this book was captain's clerk on U.S.S. *Iroquois* which put into Hakodate, Japan, in 1868 to find there a big barque with her foremast shivered off ten feet from the deck, the other two masts broken at the cross-trees. The barque had been found drifting by the Japanese authorities, with her name removed from every place it might have been. She was in a state of indescribable filth and disorder, with bloodstains in various places, and aboard there was nothing but some dirty rags, a great deal of money, and forty-one half-starved Chinamen who refused to talk. Clerk Whitehorne astutely discovered the ship's manifest behind a nailed-in board; it showed the vessel to be the *Cayolte,* out of Callao with general cargo, of American registry, but with Peruvian officers and crew except one man—the supercargo, John Douglas.

A court of inquiry was convened on the *Iroquois.* Adroit cross-examination and the sight of a hangman's noose brought it out that the Chinese had been laborers bound for some sugar-plantation peonage, who had risen against the crew, murdered all but one, and possessed themselves of the great treasure of money they knew to be aboard. They spared the supercargo, Douglas, to sail them to China; a typhoon had driven the ship off course to the north where (they said) Douglas had run away from the ship "at the ice island."

Years later Clerk Whitehorne in New York received a clipping from a California paper which showed Douglas was still alive and had reached the United States. It took him and his son all the intervening time to locate the private journal Douglas kept, to unite it with the report of the court of inquiry and with information from other sources in this first complete narration of the adventurous, fantastic tale.

The form is that of fiction. Comparison with "Mutiny on the Bounty" is inevitable, and is sustained by the style, which is the same Stevensonesque, flowing narrative used by Nordhoff and Hall. Whitehorne has not quite their skill, tending to falter at just those moments of intense action which are the most revealing and interesting in this type of writing. But he more than half makes up for it by the wonderful skill and credibility with which he follows the psychological and emotional reactions of the Chinese coolies; and no minor defect can be more than a fly-speck on one of the greatest stories of the sea.

F. P.

WALLS RISE UP. By George Sessions Perry. Doubleday, Doran. 1939. $2.

There is an inescapable reaction on the part of the reader that the author of this wayward narrative of three tramps is being conscientiously hardboiled. Generally speaking, his three hoboes are likable characters in the Cain and Steinbeck tradition. But their excursions into ribaldry and immorality fall short of conviction more often than not. They lead a catch-as-catch-can existence made up of equal parts of assault, lechery, and petty larceny. And while your interest is aroused recurringly in their conquests, amorous and economic, you leave them finally without regret, and without any particular memories. The blurb suggests that Mr. Perry's narrative is packed with social import. This reviewer was unable to identify it in any degree whatever.

R. S.

FOR EVER WILT THOU LOVE. By Ludwig Lewisohn. Dial. 1939. $2.

Mr. Lewisohn's new novel is about the difference between sacred and profane love. His central character, an Iowa architect named Mark Clement, gets up in the morning, complains to his wife at breakfast that she is frigid; at a dinner party in the evening he regales her and assorted guests with the story of a beautiful affair he once had with a girl who understood him. Wooden characters talking an artificial dialogue fail to make the story convincing; Mark's emotional striptease is embarrassing to contemplate. Readers who could take "Sparkenbroke" seriously might conceivably find something besides ineptitude in "For Ever Wilt Thou Love."

G. S.

CLAY ACRES. By Pauline Benedict Fischer. Penn. 1939. $2.50.

These should be themes to inspire great writing: the decay of a wealthy aristocracy which forgot that in "Up South" Michigan all life depends on the land; the cycle of two Gelston generations, one acquiring the Clay Acres estate, the other dissipating it; the rise of tenant farmers to destroy this false pride of the Gelstons and to restore democratic values; the coming of beauty into a utilitarian com-

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
MURDER IS A COLLECTOR'S ITEM *Elizabeth Dean* (Crime Club: $2.)	Hank Fairbanks, who hates to be called "Playboy Detective," nails killer of his uncle and cousin in Boston antique shop.	Despite fact that murderer arrives late and is rather vague, story has zip, humor, and authoritatively wormholy background.	Effective
THE JORDANS MURDER *Sydney Fowler* (Hillman-Curl: $2.)	Lawyer Jellipot finds naked corpse a-sitting on a fence, and, when Scotland Yard is at wits' ends, solves vengeance killing.	Barring a fortuitous confession at end and an annoying prosy style, yarn is average example of analytical English-type baffler.	Mildly interesting
DEATH ELECTS A MAYOR *J. G. Edwards, M.D.* (Crime Club: $2.)	Peppermint-eating detective discovers who did away with crooked mayor — and others— in graft - ridden city hospital.	Evil effect of politics on medicine, and of medicine on evil politicians, shown in convincing if unvarnished fashion.	Average
BULLDOG DRUMMOND ON DARTMOOR *Gerald Fairlie* (Hillman-Curl: $2.)	Hugh Drummond and Co. run into nest of thieves, stranglers, and such in lonely hotel with deadly secret.	Unfinished "Sapper" opus finished posthumously by former collaborator with proper regard for devices of tank melodrama.	Thriller

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munity of Free Methodists; the marriage of Union soldier and Southern girl, their rejection first of the South then of the North.

But the themes remain lifeless and cold. Some excellent characterizations of men cannot compensate for the utter stupidity of Miss Fischer's women. And they act stupidly, not because they are of the '60s and '70s, but because they will do practically anything for the convenience of the plot. The heroine, portrayed as a woman of insight, is completely duped by her no-good son and her hired man. Another marries a man she does not love, merely because he kissed her in an unguarded moment and, so she thought, had thus gained her promise. Alethea, from a Richmond plantation, languishes around, scowling at any "menial" work her husband might do. Patty is the one saving virtue; she knows what she wants, and marries him.

An absorbing story, rich in scope and promise, is betrayed by trite symbolism, poor writing, and by dialogue that sounds as if it had been culled from nineteenth-century melodramas.

R. W.

THE DAMNED DON'T CRY. By Harry Hervey. Greystone. 1939. $2.50.

Mr. Hervey's story of a girl who grows up on the wrong side of the tracks in Savannah, tries to make something of her life, but is beaten down and hardened by circumstances, is something above an ordinary melodrama but something less than a serious piece of realism. The whole life of Zelda O'Brien is narrated in Zolaesque detail, but somehow the effect is plausible at best, rather than convincing. This is true of the episode which results in Zelda's illegitimate son; it is true of the episode in which Zelda's brother, who causes most of her trouble, comes to a bad and complicated end. Zelda's characterization, as far as it goes, is consistent and lifelike, but the major events of the novel hinge on accidents rather than on characterization. It is quite true that some people's lives are shaped by the fact that the breaks go against them, but such a theme needs a powerful novelist, writing with passionate sincerity, to rouse our indignation or pity. Mr. Hervey is a competent narrator who rouses, alternately, a mild skepticism and a milder interest. He leaves us willing to believe that everything in the story could have happened, but not feeling that it makes much difference.

G. S.

THIS NETTLE, DANGER. By Philip Gibbs. Doubleday, Doran. 1939. $2.

Sir Philip Gibbs, the unofficial news-commentator of the fiction field, creates characters who share his enthusiasm for trying to understand the drifts of the times. For his present novel he has chosen a young American journalist and his sister for central figures. Neither of them is wholly credible, but they serve as reflectors for the European events which the author wants reflected. By having the journalist sent to London as correspondent for a New York newspaper to sound English opinion on European affairs the author has made for himself the perfect device for presenting the whole range of reaction from the affair Simpson to the Munich agreement. Two rather pastel romances take care of that side of the matter, but it is clear that the author cares more for politics and policies than for young love. American readers may feel that they are pictured a little too naively (when will the curse of making all Americans establish their nationality by "guessing," "goshing," and "gee-ing" on every possible occasion fall from English fiction?) and as being strangely isolated from English ideas and opinions in this day of wholesale intercommunication.

G. G.

History

THE LETTERS OF GEORGE IV. Edited by A. Aspinall. Introduction by C. K. Webster. Cambridge University Press. 3 vols. $23.

Thanks to the scholarship of Dr. Aspinall and the splendor of production given to his edition by the Cambridge University Press, a body of original correspondence becomes available to students of that critical period in which the empire of Napoleon was breaking and the far more vital empire of pre-liberal opinion, as exemplified in the letters of a highly conservative monarch and his associates, was becoming outmoded. This

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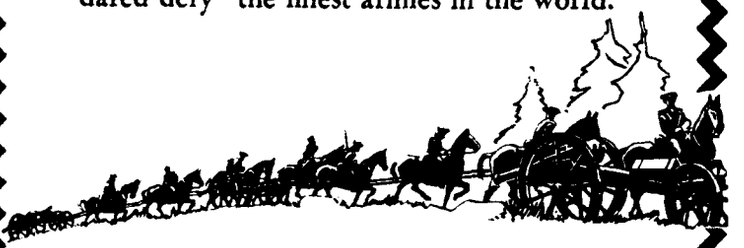

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work, in many ways a model for future editors, takes its place at once among the classic editions of correspondence descending to us from the 19th century. It is another link between the feudal past and the modern world.

The letters scarcely serve to rehabilitate the character and penetration of the King. To be sure, he won sincere respect from dependents. He was plagued by the behavior of his mother, Princess Charlotte, and by the now patent iniquities of Queen Caroline. But his views, unlike his industry, were those of his father. They were out of date. Indeed, the impression gained from this enormous collection points to the hollowness of the King's belief in his own importance as it points to a class of men who for the most part, while they endeavored to maintain their father's political creed, had surrendered much of their public spirit. The King's contribution to the volumes is small. Dr. Aspinall prints only 160 of his letters in a collection of 1596 documents, a fact which suggests considerable inappropriateness in the title of the edition.

L. P. C.

Miscellaneous

PLATO TODAY. By R. H. S. Crossman. Oxford University Press. 1939. $2.50.

The more the author of this book reads Plato's "Republic" the more, by his own admission, he hates it. The last time he read it he apparently frothed at the mouth so much he decided to drag the broad-shouldered one out of his crypt and confront him with contemporary problems in a sort of grand inquisitorial manner. As a result Plato buzzes around the modern world like a Socratic gadfly, takes obstreperous and sometimes belligerent issue with present political practices and ideas, gets crusty with a British Tory who believes the sceptered isle is a democracy, confounds American educators who demand equal opportunities for all, resigns with running commentary from Mr. Roosevelt's brain trust, smirks a bit at the modern family as a social institution, descants with disfavor on communism, attends a Nazi party meeting, and—presto—he has gone with the windy echoes of countless polemics back to his native Athens, where he failed in the first place. The author, a young British labor leader and former Tutor in Philosophy and Fellow of New College, Oxford, has something here—no less than several hours of good entertainment for those who possess a genuine interest in Plato.

R. B.

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PERSONALS

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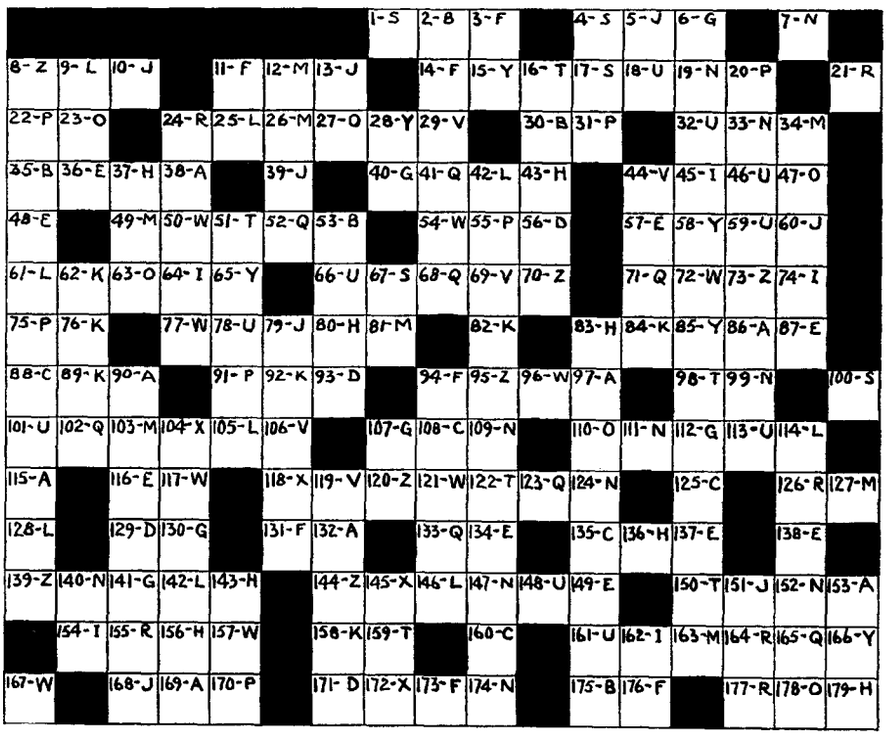
Double-Crostics: No. 261

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY



DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-six words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).

The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 18 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Terminal (adj.).

B. Author of "Venice Preserved" (1682).

C. Rich retired Anglo-Indian.

D. Greek form of "Miriam" (Bib.).

E. Severe critic.

F. Rascality; vagrancy.

G. Ticklish; uncertain.

H. Not put to the proof.

I. Fallacies (Baconian philosophy).

J. Rove, ramble.

K. Everlasting.

L. Inflict in return.

M. Full of animation; vivid.

N. In close association (3 wds.).

O. City in Washington State.

P. King Arthur's fool.

Q. Egress, emanation.

R. Raises one's spirits.

S. Sensitive person (slang).

T. Clever imitation (comp.) (slang).

U. Not subject to change.

V. Awry (dial.).

W. Self-importance.

X. Mythological ship (Gr.).

Y. Hero of historical poem by Longfellow.

Z. Uproars.

WORDS

97 86 90 115 169 153 38 132

2 175 35 30 53

108 160 88 125 135

171 129 56 93

116 149 138 134 137 48 87 57 36

173 176 94 3 131 11 14

40 141 6 107 130 112

136 83 43 37 156 179 80 143

162 74 45 154 64

10 79 168 60 39 151 13 5

62 84 158 76 82 89 92

61 105 146 25 142 42 9 128 114

163 12 26 127 81 49 103 34

147 111 19 109 7 99 124 33 140 152 174

23 27 47 63 110 178

170 91 20 75 22 55 31

165 41 52 71 68 133 123 102

177 126 21 164 155 24

4 67 100 17 1

150 122 16 98 51 159

18 59 161 78 46 101 32 113 66 148

106 69 119 44 29

54 96 117 77 72 157 50 121 167

145 104 118 172

28 15 85 58 166 65

120 95 139 144 73 8 70

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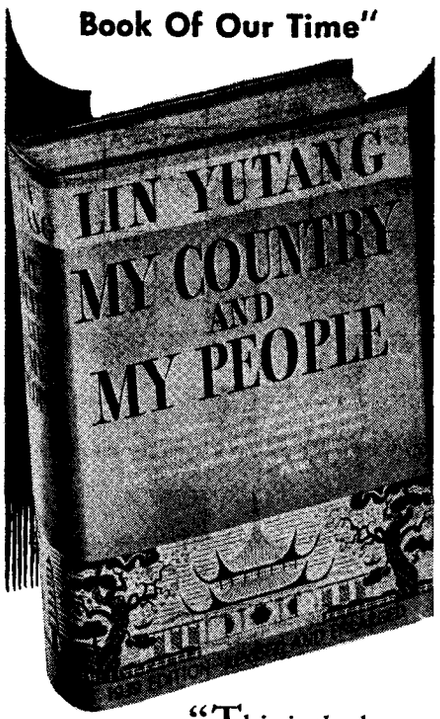

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Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

IT is the poets and philosophers who are most likely to call the turn beforehand. ☞You will nowhere find a more astonishing description of Hitlerism than on pp. 219-221 of Santayana's *Character and Opinion in the United States*—a book which, since we first encountered it in January, 1922, we have considered Required Reading for adult American citizenship. ☞It is easily available in an inexpensive reprint edition in W. W. Norton's Whiteoak Library—appropriate for Quercus. ☞In somewhat the same way much of the misery that has come upon the world in the past few years was pretty sharply foreboded by C. E. Montague in *Disenchantment* (1922) and by T. S. Eliot in some remarkable poems—for instance *The Hollow Men* (1925). ☞The travel advertisers got an unlucky break on Sunday, March 19, another of those days when everyone was watching Europe with fingers crossed. "Get Behind the Headlines," cried Cunard White Star, "Enjoy Europe and Form Your Own Opinions." ☞"A Glorious Vacation in Gay, Carefree Germany," shouted the German Railroads Information Office. ☞But most sadly ironic of all, a little article (in the *Herald Tribune*) saying that "Into Czecho-Slovakia's 65 principal resorts and recreation centers the government is pouring all its support."

☞A Must Item for all deep-sea readers is *The Saga of "Cimba"* by Richard Maury. ☞"When a club of 15 members," writes Mr. J. G. Hodgson (librarian of Colorado State College), "located in a city of 12,000 population, far away from literary colonies, publishes three books of worth in one year, that is news." ☞We agree. The club is the Writers Club of Fort Collins, Colorado, and the three books are *Children of the Prairie* (Crowell) by Alice B. Curtis; *The Secret of Silver Peak* (Random House) by Sarah Lindsay Schmidt; and *Shakespearean Criticism in the United States* (H. W. Wilson) by Alfred Westfall. ☞Mr. Hodgson adds that before coming to live in Fort Collins he had known many authors elsewhere, but had never met a literary group "that would take the serious and sometimes brutal comments of their fellow members as do the writers of Fort Collins." ☞Speaking of the vagaries of authors, nothing grieves us more (we don't know why) than the English habit of spelling coconut as *cokernut*. ☞More astonishing still to find hobo called hobboe in that classic of tripe, Stacpoole's *The Blue Lagoon*. ☞There is some very agreeable stuff for lovers of the Muse in Louis MacNeice's *Modern Poetry* (Oxford Press). We enjoyed the chapters he calls his Case-Book, the history of his literary tastes in school and college. We were pleased at his discovering, as a schoolboy, "the glitter of Horace, realizing that English with its articles and lack of inflexions could hardly ever equal Horace either in concentration or in subtlety of word-order." ☞After reading John Marquand's highly entertaining *Wickford Point*, which serves up some phases of New England on whole-wheat-toasted, some may want to refresh their minds a little as to who or what actually were the Massachusetts Brahmins. ☞M. A. De Wolfe Howe, whose *Holmes of the Breakfast Table* will be published next month, notes that Oliver Wendell Holmes first coined the term in *Elsie Venner* in 1860. He described his New England Brahmins as "pallid, undervitalized, shy, sensitive creatures, whose only birthright is an aptitude for learning." ☞Dr. Holmes would have been much startled by the present status of a Brahmin family as described in Marquand's jovial and lemon-juice comedy. It is much nearer the truth than that anomalous novel Santayana's *The Last Puritan* which was such naive fiction and such admirable palaver. ☞Alexander Woollcott, just now being waggishly dismembered by Wolcott Gibbs in *The New Yorker*, has compiled *The Woollcott Listener*, a selection of favorite essays and stories, for the American Foundation for the Blind. Mr. Woollcott read the selections onto phonograph disks at the studios of the Foundation. The Foundation's series of Talking Books reach the unseeing population of the country (about 130,000) through 27 public libraries which have special departments for the blind. ☞The most grievous item on any publisher's press-notes just now comes from the John Day Company. It says that the conscientious Vermont matron who did this year's spring cleaning for Mr. and Mrs. Frederic Van De Water, washed all the bottles in his wine cellar in warm soapsuds, thus removing equally cherished labels and cobwebs.

☞We turn hastily to more cheering thoughts, for instance a French review of *Autant en emporte le vent* which we know better as *Gone With the Wind*. ☞The French translation, says *Les Nouvelles Litteraires* of Paris, is by M. Caillé and is both elegant and faithful. The lady reviewer, Jeanine Delpech, exclaims "Un livre terrible, parce qu'on ne peut ni le quitter, ni en sauter des passages, il vous détourne de la vie quotidienne et vous obsède longtemps après qu'on l'a fini." ☞Mlle. Delpech deplores that the "indiscretion" of Miss Mitchell's admirers has made it impossible for her to get any work done since, but feels sure that "cette jeune femme aux yeux immenses" will give us other fine books. ☞Jo Davidson is due on the *Normandie* next week, bringing with him his completed statue of Walt Whitman. ☞*Number 2, The Pines*—well remembered by all readers of Max Beerbohm's exquisite essay—was to be sold at auction on March 20. This is the house on Putney Hill, in the suburbs of London, where Swinburne lived for many years, under the care of Watts-Dunton. ☞Herbert Krause of Sioux Falls, S. D., was awarded last week the thousand dollar prize, given annually by the Friends of American Writers for the best novel of Midwestern life, for *Wind without Rain*.

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